



Cultivating the leadership potential of Queensland's farm businesswomen

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Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd

This is the final report for the QFF project, “Advancing Leadership and Business Skills amongst Queensland’s Farm Business Women”. This report was prepared by Jane Muller (Growcom), Stephanie Slade (DAF) and Karyn Manktelow (DAF).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A key theme of our times is the recognition that leadership groups would better represent the broad interests of modern society by becoming more diverse and inclusive. A significant body of evidence is available to demonstrate that this diversity in leadership delivers better economic, social and environmental outcomes. Achieving greater parity in the level of women's participation in senior management and leadership roles is integral to this goal – and this includes in the agriculture sector.

The Queensland Farmers Federation (QFF) recognises and values the contributions women make to Queensland's agricultural industries and rural communities. We also recognise that, in many cases, women remain under-represented in senior management and leadership spaces in agriculture. QFF and its member organisations are committed to addressing this by supporting women to further develop their business management and leadership capabilities and by seeking to increase the representation of women in the full suite of industry leadership roles.

This project has provided an opportunity for QFF to connect with over 200 women involved in farm business and wider roles that support the agriculture sector to build a deeper understanding of their current skills and responsibilities, the strengths they offer, and the aspirations they hold. Through this project, QFF has also forged stronger connections with other organisations pursuing similar goals, in particular the Queensland Rural Regional and Remote Women's Network (QRRRW), the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) and the Office of Small Business (OSB).

From the findings presented in this report, some preliminary recommendations have been identified and outlined below. These warrant further consideration and development by QFF member organisations, QRRRW, DAF, OSB and other key stakeholders. QFF aims to host a workshop to consider this report and refine its recommendations in the coming months.

The project's findings suggest that farm and rural businesswomen would benefit from the establishment of two distinct programs and support networks. The first should have a strong business management and development focus. The second should support personal development and leadership capacity building that women could apply in both business management and in wider leadership contexts.

Recommendations for supporting farming women's business management and leadership capabilities

- QFF, DAF and OSB should consider the findings of this project and collaborate towards identifying and refining existing programs and designing future programs to ensure the needs of farm/rural businesswomen are met, in particular through the Advancing Small Business in Queensland Strategy, the Advancing Women in Business Initiative, and other Queensland Government initiatives.
- The Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance (RJSA) should consider the findings of this project and advance efforts to ensure farm businesswomen can access the training and skills development opportunities they are seeking.
- Existing mentoring programs should be enhanced to ensure the specific mentoring needs of farm businesswomen and other rural business women are met. Mentors need to be well matched to women's specific needs, interests and business stage/direction.
- Strategies to more effectively engage farm businesswomen in export-readiness and trade related programs should be identified.

Recommendations for supporting farm and rural business women's wider leadership potential

- The Queensland Government and Queensland industry organizations should note the findings of this report, which identify that a strong pool of leaders already exists amongst Queensland's farm and rural businesswomen, and that there is good potential to support a pipeline of developing female leaders in the Queensland agriculture sector.
- A valuable immediate action should be to map the pathways farm and rural businesswomen can take to leadership roles and promote this through industry networks.
- As a priority, mentoring or shadowing arrangements should be implemented in existing leadership groups as a means to progress emerging female leaders from the agriculture and rural business sector. QFF and its member organizations can show leadership in this area by implementing measures to actively bring women into industry leadership roles.
- To support Queensland's farm and rural businesswomen to reach their full potential, sustained investment is required to establish and maintain a well-designed leadership development program that targets rural women's needs and can be delivered at local, regional and state-wide scales. Such a program could be designed to feed into established national-level programs. There would be value in QFF, QRRRW, DAF, OSB and other relevant agencies working together to address this need.

The insights gained from this project will be invaluable for guiding on-going efforts in industry, the community and government to support and encourage rural women to enhance their involvement, influence and impact in a wider array of management and leadership spaces. QFF looks forward to pursuing opportunities to collaborate with other organisations and secure investment in this essential area of industry development.

BACKGROUND

Queensland's gross value of production of primary industry commodities (at farm gate) is forecast to be approximately \$15.72 billion in the 2017-18 financial year. The additional value derived from first stage processing is approximately \$4.15 billion. Approximately 83% of Queensland land is used for agricultural production, and the direct contribution to the State's economy is \$7.7 billion (2.6% of Queensland's economy; Queensland Government, 2017a).

Women are estimated to contribute greater than 49% of the total value attributable to farming communities, through a range of paid and unpaid activities (Sheridan & Haslam McKenzie, 2009). Yet women are under-represented in leadership roles in the agriculture sector (Sheridan & Haslam McKenzie, 2009; Marslen, 2015), with very limited improvement in overall statistics in the two decades to 2009 (Sheridan & Haslam McKenzie, 2009).

Recognition is growing, however, regarding the contributions of women and the vast untapped potential that women in agriculture represent. General awareness of women's contributions in the primary industry sector has been raised through numerous initiatives. These include the Invisible Farmer Project, which documents the rich historical and current contributions of women to the development of the agricultural industry; and the Women in Rural, Regional and Remote Enterprises (WiRE) project, that has been established to deliver an entrepreneurial capacity building program and support hub for rural Queensland women. Along with the direct benefits arising from these programs, there are various indirect benefits gained through generation of public discussion about the issues facing rural Australia. High profile women in media such as Pip Courtney and Annabel Crabb frequently lend their voices to the conversations around the value that women add to the rural sector in Australia.

On International Women's Day 2018, Pip Courtney addressed a gathering of DAF staff to share some of her insights about the informal rural women's network that has developed over the past 20 years. Pip opened by declaring that *"the battle has been won"*, with acceptance now of the rights of our *"clever, resilient, tough, civic minded, hard working, generous, supportive and collaborative"* rural women to call themselves farmers.

Pip shared stories of women in agriculture who shouldered the majority of work as the family caregiver; frequently took on responsibilities within their communities; shared worries about commodity prices, weather and debt; and carried a constant worry about their husbands, especially in times of crisis. Through talking to these women about how they cope with these stresses, the key message that Pip received was that, regardless of their remoteness, these women survive by keeping an eye on each other, reaching out, and supporting each other when times get tough.

Often, these women connect face to face at events such as the Channel Country Ladies Day or the annual Queensland Rural, Regional and Remote Women's Network conference. Pip stated that *"if government can put more money into successful volunteer run organisations like QRRRWN, like the Channel Country Ladies Day, the potential return on investment in improved mental health is there"*. This is relevant to not only mental health issues, but these events frequently focus on physical wellbeing (e.g. by providing mobile breast screening or pap smears), provide an important face-to-face connection with other network members, and incorporate workshops on topics including personal and business development.

Pip called for a movement where women collectively heed the call to improve the circumstances of the vulnerable, the underpaid and the overlooked. She suggested that by asking *"What can I do?"* we can begin to address issues including the gender pay gap and the tendency of women to take most of the responsibilities for raising families and caring for ageing parents. Pip's personal commitments included mentoring other women; saying yes to women's focused functions as an attendee, a speaker or an emcee; profiling women to improve visibility; and attending jobs and training expos. Pip challenged her audience to leverage their strengths and networks to support others in need.

The Queensland Government has recognised the vital contribution women make to the Queensland economy and community through the release of the Queensland Women's Strategy 2016-21 (Queensland Government, 2016). The Women's Strategy drives for gender equality to address:

- the 16.7% gender pay gap in Queensland
- the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, particularly on boards of management
- the underrepresentation of women within traditionally male dominated industries
- the unequal responsibilities women have in unpaid domestic work and caring for dependents
- the overrepresentation of women as victims of sexual offences, stalking, domestic and family violence.

While the Strategy aims to address these matters across Queensland society in general, the issues it highlights provide a logical starting point to discuss the challenges that women face in the rural sector – acknowledging that their challenges are further compounded by isolation, limited employment opportunities, and an even stronger culture of allocating domestic roles to the female partner in a relationship (James, 1989). This may then lead to a discussion of the barriers that women face in forging new pathways for themselves as leaders and the tools that would help them to identify and achieve their full potential.

Another key Queensland Government initiative is the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy 2016-20 (Queensland Government, 2017b). A core element of this strategy is the Advancing Women in Business Program which aims to support more women to start and grow their own businesses. The program connects women with resources, events, networking, mentoring, learning and partnership opportunities. It also aims to boost the participation of women as mentors in the Mentoring for Growth program.

In relation to executive leadership positions, the Queensland Government has committed to two targets: that by 2020, 50 per cent of all new board appointees to Queensland Government bodies are to be women; and to achieve 50 per cent representation of women on Queensland Government bodies (Queensland Government, 2016). The importance of these targets has been reaffirmed by recent analyses which demonstrate that board and organisational performance is significantly higher in boards with greater gender diversity (Deloitte, 2016); and a number of key insights published by the Queensland Government (2017c) which illustrate the benefits as:

- Achieving board gender parity will increase productivity in Queensland by \$87 million
- High performing boards consist of both men and women, are committed to diversity, and are highly inclusive
- Board commitment needs to remove barriers to result in concrete action
- Courageous decision-makers who step up and actively challenge the status quo will be the drivers of change in Queensland.

At the corporate level, gaps in leadership capability are recognised as a significant impediment to growth, presenting challenges in the potential to expand into new markets (Deloitte 2014). This analysis indicates that development of leaders requires sustained and systematic intervention at all levels to identify and bring on-line young leaders; develop and retain senior leaders later in their careers; and build new leadership pipelines at all levels of an organisation. Further to the global findings, the Deloitte (2014) report demonstrates that Australia has a relatively high capability gap measured as the difference between urgency to improve leadership capacity (high) and readiness to address the issue (low). The report encourages companies to re-examine and redefine their leadership development programs using the following strategies:

- Sustained investment
- Leadership programs targeting leaders at all levels

- Adoption of flexible leadership pathways
- Identifying skills gaps and coaching and supporting leaders to develop their capability
- Tapping into local cultural experiences of potential leaders.

Read together, the current knowledge about leadership and capability, the challenges faced in rural communities, and women's potential to contribute to the change agenda begin to paint a compelling picture of the need to address the issue of rural women's access to capacity building opportunities and clearer pathways to leadership roles across a range of activities and levels.

It is also clear that efforts aimed towards encouraging, skilling and supporting women from the agriculture sector to participate in leadership roles in business, industry, community and wider levels have the potential to enrich community and industry governance bodies, help meet government targets, and deliver significant economic and social benefits to Queensland industries and communities.

QFF and its member organisations recognise that there is strong demand from women involved in farm businesses for information, seminars, workshops and mentoring programs that target their personal and professional development needs. While industry groups have sought to deliver programs and maintain women's networks (such as the women in cotton, cane and horticulture initiatives), the broad range of needs and limited available resources have often resulted in opportunistic short-term programs that struggle to maintain momentum and progress. Accordingly, this project has sought to consider ways to build on past efforts, strengthen networks into a collaborative project team and identify opportunities to improve on current models in a way that maximises limited resources to optimise outcomes.

It is well understood that in order to promote participation and the effectiveness of women's events, it is essential that they be organised at times and in venues that are accessible to target participants (Marslen, 2015) and focus on their specific needs and interests. Yet, the needs and interests of women from the Queensland agriculture sector around leadership capacity development have never been formally canvassed, analysed and documented.

This project has, therefore, aimed to engage women involved in the agriculture sector in Queensland to identify their business development and leadership aspirations, scope the support they need to enhance their capabilities as business and community leaders, and connect them to available programs and services. The project has established a foundation network of farming women, provided an initial boost to the involvement of farming women in existing programs, and generated baseline information to inform the design of a future, larger-scale program targeting farm businesswomen's leadership development.

QFF has been pleased to have had the opportunity to work with the Office of Small Business and contribute to the Advancing Women in Business initiative, and to collaborate with our project partners: Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Queensland Rural Regional and Remote Women's Network, AustSafe Superannuation, Rabobank and CSIRO.

OBJECTIVES

The broad project objectives were to:

- Deliver workshops for Queensland farm businesswomen that:
 - Build leadership skills
 - Connect women with existing opportunities and programs (e.g. business planning workshops, executive board membership programs)
 - Identify those who are interesting in offering or accessing mentoring, and
 - Scope ongoing interests and priority needs.
- Identify the aspirations of Queensland farm businesswomen regarding:
 - Achieving positions of leadership and influence within and beyond their farm businesses and industries
 - Building and maintaining social and professional networks, and participating in mentoring activities (both as mentees and mentors)
 - Pursuing business innovation or diversification, entrepreneurship, supply chain collaboration and/or market access
- Gather perspectives from Queensland farm businesswomen about the barriers to enhancing their influence in business and industry and to pursuing leadership roles, and their interests in and need for a targeted, longer-term leadership capacity building program for women in Queensland agriculture (which may form the basis for a proposal for a subsequent project).

To achieve these objectives, QFF has worked collaboratively with industry (individuals and representative bodies), government, research institutions and other interested parties to identify and utilise existing resources, and identify gaps and opportunities for the development of new tools.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

In its original conceptualisation, the focus of the project was farm businesswomen from the intensive agricultural industries. At an early stage of the project, however, women from grazing and cropping industries and from broader rural roles indicated a strong interest so the scope was expanded to encompass Queensland farm businesswomen from all agricultural industries, and rural women generally connected to the agriculture sector.

A five-stage approach was undertaken to meet project objectives:

1. Issues scoping with project partners

A roundtable discussion for project partners and key industry stakeholders was held on 10 August 2017 to gather perspectives from past and current women's projects and to provide advice on project methods, research design, timing and format of regional workshops. The meeting was attended by representatives of QFF and its member organisations, the OSB, DAF, QRRRW, AustSafe Superannuation, CSIRO, and Jessica Fealy, a 2017 Queensland finalist for the AgriFutures Australia Rural Women's Award.

2. Assessment of available programs and information

A desktop analysis was undertaken to document available leadership, professional development and innovation programs to map and assess what is currently available to Queensland women in farm businesses. The intent of the project was not to develop new materials where these already exist, rather it was to draw on existing resources and programs and raise awareness of these, while identifying gaps in existing materials.

3. Regional workshops

Regional workshops were held during October 2017 to connect and engage Queensland farm businesswomen in an open discussion about leadership, and to discuss priority future issues, needs and opportunities.

The half-day workshops were held in five major regional locations around Queensland (see *Table 1*), with the aim of bringing together women from a range of agricultural sectors and providing a stimulus for discussions about their current leadership roles, future aspirations, barriers and enablers to reaching their goals.

Table 1: Regional workshop details

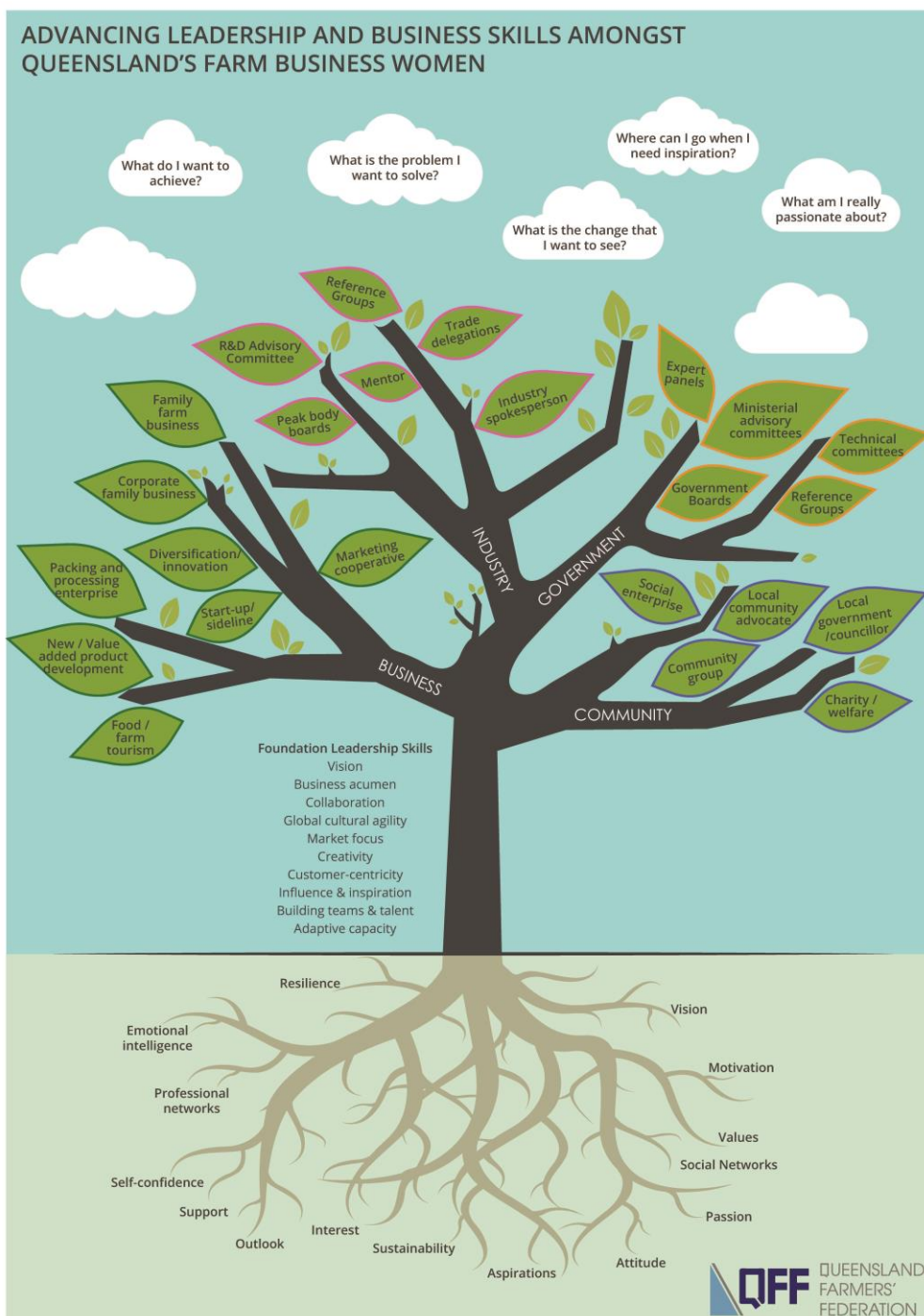
Location	Date	Number of industry participants	Guest speakers
Mareeba	4 October 2017	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jess Fealy, Mareeba mango and avocado grower (Blue Sky Produce) and 2017 AgriFutures Australia Rural Women's Award Queensland Finalist• Krista Watkins, Mareeba banana and banana flour producer (Natural Evolution), and 2018 AgriFutures Australia Rural Women's Award Queensland Winner
Toowoomba	17 October 2017	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tanya Atkinson, Agribusiness strategy advisor, Younique Management• Jess Fealy, Blue Sky Produce
Caboolture	18 October 2017	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jodie Redcliffe, Vice President, Australian Chicken Growers Council• Jess Fealy, Blue Sky Produce
Emerald	21 October 2017	10	No guest speakers
Bundaberg	25 October 2017	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tina McPherson, Bundaberg passionfruit and strawberry grower (Tinaberries) and Chair of Australian Passionfruit Growers Association• Jess Fealy, Blue Sky Produce

A brief profile of each of the workshop guest speakers is presented in Appendix 1.

Workshop participants were guided through a series of facilitated discussions, guest speaker presentations and an interactive ‘leadership tree’ activity to explore the meaning of leadership, the range of leadership spaces where women presently make an impact (or could in future), the barriers that constrain women from stepping into wider leadership roles, and the support or resources that would be useful in helping them move ahead in business and beyond. The basic leadership tree schematic (*Figure 1*) was used to collate responses across four key areas of leadership – business, industry, government and community.

The Emerald workshop was held within the QRRRW Annual Conference, which brings together rural women from across the State and hosts diverse guest presenters. This workshop was limited to the ‘leadership tree’ activity, as it was felt that the other conference sessions provided good stimulus for this activity.

Figure 1: The Leadership Tree



4. Online survey of farm businesswomen

An online survey was conducted to test the key workshop findings across a wider group of women. The survey structure followed the key objectives of the project, seeking to gather information about women's current leadership activities and skills; their aspirations; barriers to participation; and enablers and development opportunities that women would choose to access.

The survey was opened on 8 March 2018 and was promoted through workshop participants and project partner networks.

5. Gaps and opportunities assessment

All of the data gathered through the project was analysed to identify issues and opportunities; assess the extent of fit between identified needs and existing programs; and consider recommendations for future programs.

RESULTS

This project has progressed three related pieces of work which provide a comprehensive set of findings to inform future thinking around the development of women in the Queensland agriculture sector. Project outcomes are presented below in three sections:

1. A compilation of current programs and resources relevant to women in agriculture, and more generally
2. Outcomes from a project partners' meeting and regional workshops that were designed to stimulate conversation and draw out the issues in relation to women's current leadership roles, future aspirations, and the barriers and enablers for women in achieving their goals
3. Findings from an online survey which was designed to gather further data from a larger sample of rural women regarding the issues raised at project workshops.

Current programs and resources

A desktop review was undertaken to identify existing resources which could assist rural women in mapping and progressing through their leadership journey. Identified resources have been grouped under headings that align with the priorities for further development as identified in the project workshops and survey. Some workshop attendees expressed that they were interested in furthering their leadership skills, but were unsure what that meant for them. For this reason, a list of general resources has been included to stimulate thought.

The resources list developed (Appendix 2) was distributed to project partners and workshop attendees, who were invited to identify further resources for inclusion. The list is intended to be a living document which can be added to as additional resources are developed or identified; however the mechanism for future administration of the list is unclear. It may provide a useful starting point for future projects.

During regional workshops, participants identified a range of additional resources that they access for information and development. These are:

- Information sources such as mainstream media; local and industry networks; social media; and groups/agencies including QRRRW; the Rural Business Collective; DAF; and industry specific Research and Development Corporations
- Industry group memberships
- The South Burnett Community Leadership Program
- Training opportunities including social media e-leaders course
- A range of leadership/personal/professional development seminars and workshops.

Project partners meeting and regional workshops

The project partners' meeting, held on 10 August 2017, confirmed the support of QFF partner organisations and the need for the project, and reinforced the concept of utilising and strengthening existing networks and resources. All project partners stated their clear objective of developing programs that assisted women to identify and reach their aspirations as business, industry or community leaders. There was agreement that, in the current funding environment, maximum benefit would be gained by developing collaborative projects or programs based on identified priorities and known gaps.

The partners' meeting provided some initial mapping of the issues farm businesswomen face in pursuing leadership roles. It was recognised that women have highly relevant experience and knowledge to bring to leadership roles and that there are many opportunities for women within industry organisations at regional, state and national scales. A diverse range of barriers to women's participation were identified however, including that women are typically juggling multiple responsibilities, there are often significant time and financial costs associated with participation, and that some women have experienced a 'boys club' mentality or resistance to their presence in leadership groups. A number of partners agreed that succession planning in leadership groups tends to be poorly done, and that not enough is done to show new members of leadership groups 'the ropes'. A summary of the project partners' meeting is presented at Appendix 3.

The regional workshops were relatively informal in their structure. The consistency in delivery of the key presenters and the leadership tree activity allow a broad comparison of outcomes between regions, however the different guests speakers and composition of industry members at each workshop resulted in a slightly different focus in each region. Despite this, there are some valuable insights that can be identified from the combined workshop results.

Participant feedback indicated that the workshops were valued as both a forum to consider and start to plan broader leadership ambitions, and an opportunity for women to network and share their experiences and perspectives with industry peers.

The results presented in this section provide a combined summary of workshop outcomes. Individual regional workshop outcomes are detailed at Appendix 4.

In total, 83 women attended regional workshops. Of these women, 53 identified primarily as primary producers (18 from the beef industry; 16 from horticulture; and the remaining from cane, nursery, dairy, cotton, intensive livestock and mixed cropping/grazing industries). Twenty two women represented agri-services (e.g. banking and insurance); six represented community services; three were from regional economic development bodies; and two were from Government departments.

Women's perspectives on leadership spaces and roles

Workshop participants were asked to review the leadership tree diagram and suggest additional "branches" and "leaves" where they identified additional spaces where women do, or might, play leadership roles. Collated responses to this activity are noted in *Table 2* below.

Table 2: Compiled “branches” and “leaves” from leadership tree diagram. Additional items identified in regional workshops are shown in *italics*

Branch	Leaves
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Boards • Ministerial Advisory Committees • Reference Groups • Technical committees • Expert panels • <i>Farming services</i> • <i>Joint industry-government working group to progress export readiness and streamlined trade</i>
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peak body boards • R&D Advisory Committee • Reference Groups • Trade delegations • Industry spokesperson • Mentor • <i>Industry association member</i>
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family farm business • Corporate family farm business • Packing and processing enterprise • Diversification / innovation / <i>commercialisation</i> • New / value added product development • Marketing cooperative • Food / farm tourism • Start-up / sideline • <i>Own business</i> • <i>Trade</i> • <i>Private boards</i> • <i>Agri-service industries e.g. insurance</i> • <i>Corporate / commercial farming</i> • <i>Farm administration / finance</i> • <i>Off-farm work / activities</i> • <i>Supply chain knowledge</i>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community advocate • Local government / councillor • Community group • Charity / welfare • Social enterprise • <i>Informal: self, family, community</i>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Information sharing</i> • <i>Media</i> • <i>Social media</i>
Global Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trade</i> • <i>Consultancy</i> • <i>Export readiness including legal, economic, financial, cultural understanding, technical requirements</i>
Education and professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Industry knowledge</i> • <i>Industry networks</i> • <i>Continuous development/life-long learning</i> • <i>Technology</i>

development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transition / diversification</i> • <i>Farm qualifications</i> • <i>Practical skills</i> • <i>Personal / professional development</i> • <i>Youth training</i> • <i>Re-skilling</i>
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Individual workshop discussions highlighted some interesting regional differences. For example, Mareeba and Toowoomba discussions focused strongly on communications and social media; and trade and export readiness were of interest to participants in Caboolture. Bundaberg workshop participants expressed interests in advancing their knowledge of supply chains and business transition, highlighting the need for women to have access to training or qualifications relevant to agricultural businesses, particularly when many women come from other trades and professions prior to entering farming.

Leadership roles women currently play

Table 3 shows the collated results from the five regional workshops showing the top areas where women identified that they currently play leadership roles (*note that participants were not limited in the number of leadership areas that they could select).

Table 3: Most selected areas where workshop participants identified as a leader

Branch	Leaf	Number of women identifying as a leader
Business	Family farm business	52
Community	Community group	48
Industry	Mentor	18
Business	Start-up / sideline	18
Business	Diversification / innovation	17
Industry	Industry spokesperson	14
Business	New / value added product development	14
Community	Local community advocate*	13
Business	Food / farm tourism	12
Community	Social media	12
Business	Marketing cooperatives	9

(*separately to the tree activity, a further six participants in Toowoomba indicated that they play a role as a spokesperson or advocate).

The results show that 62% of workshop participants consider themselves to be a leader within their family farm business, while 58% were in leadership roles at a community level, such as in a community group or organisation. More than 20% currently identify as a mentor to others. More than 16% of workshop participants play a spokesperson role for their industry.

Being active in social media (for local or industry advocacy, for business growth, or for networking and information exchange) was identified as an additional area of leadership or influence in three workshops (Mareeba, Toowoomba and Emerald). Fourteen per cent of participants identified as playing a leadership role in this area.

Looking across a number of categories (industry spokesperson, community advocate, and social media) 45 participants (54%) indicated their involvement in communication and advocacy roles. Although the data cannot be separated to account for participants who selected two or more of these categories, the figures suggest that there is strong sense amongst farm business women of the roles that they play in being a voice for their industry or community.

Women's leadership aspirations and interests

Table 4 shows the areas in which workshop participants identified the most interest in future leadership roles. (*note that participants were not limited in the number of leadership areas that they could select).

Table 4: Most selected areas where workshop participants identified future leadership aspirations

Branch	Leaf	Number of women with leadership aspirations
Industry	Industry spokesperson	18
Industry	Mentor	16
Government	Government boards	12
Business	New / value added product development	11
Government	Reference groups	10
Business	Diversification / innovation	9
Community	Community group	9

Social media was another major area of interest, with six participants identifying this as an area where they would like to play a more active role in the future.

These outcomes reinforce the strong messages coming from workshop discussions, that participants identify strongly as an integral part of a community and have a strong inclination to become involved in roles that benefit others, as well as advancing growth and success of their own businesses.

Key enablers: getting off the dance floor and onto the balcony

There was much discussion around the skills and knowledge that rural women bring to the table as a result of the multiple and diverse roles that they play in their families, businesses, other employment and communities. Workshop discussions provided an opportunity to identify the enabling factors that women experience that help them in their endeavours and assist them to successfully develop and apply their skills in different contexts. These are summarised in *Table 5*.

Table 5: Key enablers for the development of leadership skills

Category	Specifics
Training / skills development / professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicated funding programs are needed to address identified priorities• Funding identified as a key issue – training needs to be free or affordable
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants identified challenges with dedicating the time to fully consider and appreciate their own strengths, talents, skills, passions, drivers and motivators; and plan for future activities in a clear and purposeful way• Discussions focussed on the tendency of women to continue to take on additional responsibilities. There was a clear need identified whereby women need to be equipped to holistically review their roles and make active choices about where to invest resources, time and effort, including the need to make decisions about disinvestment
Support	<p>The need for support was acknowledged at a range of levels including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• logistics e.g. partner, family, friends capacity to take up family responsibilities• emotional support• skills and knowledge• financial support including a better understanding of the financial planning and business finance; but also opportunities to access funding or other ways to invest in skills development• professional support networks in the form of peers, mentors, champions and sponsors, with acknowledgement of the unique skills that each of these roles brings to confidence building, guidance and critical questioning, and introduction/promotion within new/established networks
Personal attributes	<p>Workshop attendees identified the following personal attributes as leadership enablers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determination• Open-mindedness, a positive attitude and an adventurous spirit• Capacity to reflect and learn• A growth mindset and the pursuit of new ideas• Ability to “get on the balcony” and take a broader perspective• Commitment to achieving life balance, including the importance of taking time for rest and renewal

- Capacity to recognise and seize opportunities

(side box)

"I have sought comfort in the stories I have read from other women who have contributed to the Invisible Farmer Project. My story is not one that stands alone; it is one that I have heard over and over. Knowing that I am not alone inspires me to keep fighting for women in our industry and for recognition for their roles and contributions to each family farm/business.

....

When I reflect on what motivates me, it would have to be my drive to bring women into our family business and have their contribution acknowledged. Although I myself have 4 sons, I have 3 Samwell nieces who I would love to see embrace farm life and find themselves a role within the business. And I hope one day that my sons' partners will feel that they will have an opportunity to contribute to our family business if that is something that they are passionate about. It has certainly been an interesting journey to this point and although I still continue to feel undervalued, and sometimes that my contribution might be better placed elsewhere, I continue on, always with my sisters-in-law and nieces in mind.

I work with amazingly talented and dedicated men and I hope that I can in a small way begin to open their eyes to a new way of seeing gender roles – not seeing women as a threat, but as equal contributors to the team. It is time to change the old traditions and values and move forward with equality and recognition for the positive and valid contributions that women can make. I hope that I can leave that legacy for the future women in our business."

Samwell (2018)

Key Barriers: the struggle to keep all of the balls in the air

Workshop discussions considered the barriers that women encounter or perceive are holding them back from achieving their leadership aspirations. Outcomes of these discussions are summarised in *Table 6*.

The discussions around barriers drew out comments from some participants that the role of women as leaders in the rural sector is a relatively new trend. Because of this, some people maintain outdated perceptions of women's capabilities, which tend to hold some women back in more traditional roles. This is increasingly being challenged as more women step successfully into leadership positions and gain acceptance within the agriculture sector.

Table 6: Key barriers to women entering the leadership space

Category	Specifics
Time limitations	<p>Workshop attendees reported that, frequently due to the pressure and pace involved in operating a farm business, they take on an unequal role in relation to domestic and family care, leading to both physical and mental fatigue.</p> <p>Related to this, workshop participants highlighted the difficulties associated with maintaining multiple responsibilities. It was also noted that the nature and extent of demands on their time and focus are strongly linked to stages of life, health and business.</p>
Competing	There was broad acknowledgement at workshops that women frequently have the talent, potential, skills and knowledge to contribute to leadership activities.

responsibilities	<p>However, because they tend to manage multiple responsibilities across family, the farm business, other employment and the community, women often feel that they have too many balls in the air and cannot contemplate taking on additional responsibilities.</p>
Finances	<p>Prioritisation of financial needs was discussed at length. The funds (and time) required to attend leadership/professional development is generally given a lower priority than other financial needs including growing or maintaining the farm business.</p> <p>A number of workshop participants expressed interest also in understanding how to access funding or finance to pursue business growth and innovation.</p>
Self-confidence	<p>Women's lack of confidence was a key discussion topic, with the following challenges raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • women tend to underestimate own value and potential • women tend to use "disclaimers" in professional forums, e.g. apologising for a lack of full knowledge of an issue before expressing an idea/opinion/perspective • there are complexities around how farming women identify themselves and put a title on their role(s) • there is a lack of a critical mass of trail-blazing successful women in agriculture, so women in leadership roles and positions may feel that this is still a new/untested/risky position • this may arise from the conscious and unconscious biases resulting from a lack of understanding or respect for the multiple roles that women play in farm businesses • women have a tendency to avoid nominating for higher level roles until they feel they have all of the skills and experience to successfully perform the role
Technological barriers	<p>Women identified that the limitations around information and communication technologies experienced in remote areas exacerbated the tyranny of distance, leading to difficulties in accessing resources and facilitation in building support networks.</p> <p>Conversely, it was also noted that it is extremely challenging to keep up with rapid technological change.</p>
Business structures and succession processes	<p>Women raised issues around succession processes in rural/farm business and the implications of poorly defined business structures or a lack of clarity regarding family members' roles in the business. When these matters are poorly managed, women cannot feel confident in their place within their own business and, therefore, do not feel they can legitimately represent their community or industry in wider circles. This limits opportunities for high-potential women to step beyond the home sphere into business or wider leadership roles.</p>
Multiple women's organisations	<p>There is a plethora of women's groups, networks and initiatives – workshop participants commented that while they recognised this can be positive, they also noted that the diversity of established groups makes it difficult for women to select where to direct their membership, participation and energy.</p>

Critical gaps

From the workshop discussions, some critical gaps in current approaches to supporting leadership development amongst farm and rural businesswomen were identified, including:

- Investment in women's leadership development at a state level i.e. a lack of current programs that target and subsidise participation
- Active processes for mentoring and assisting rural and farm businesswomen to take up leadership roles
- Insufficient succession planning within boards and committees
- A lack of pathway mapping to show rural women the practical steps they can take towards leadership roles
- Insufficient sharing of rural women's success stories, our innovators and leaders.

Women's priorities for professional development program design and content

Workshop participants identified a range of development opportunities they would be interested in accessing. These include Queensland-based programs targeted at developing personal and professional leadership skills such as confidence building; techniques for building visibility, networks and profile; access to appropriate mentors; skills in communication and conflict management; training in corporate governance and preparatory courses for board membership roles. Participants believed that scholarships, bursaries or subsidies would be a critical factor in supporting women's participation.

Participants articulated specific professional development needs for their roles within farm and rural businesses, In particular, women identified:

- Up-skilling and re-skilling for business growth or transition-
 - to build core farm business management skills
 - to develop skills and strategies in social media for business promotion
 - to build general management skills including negotiation, communication, conflict management and problem solving
 - business coaching to pursue business growth, diversification, transition and/or value adding
 - increased access to knowledge, skills and networks to enhance women's capabilities in export market development.
- Financial skills and knowledge including-
 - traditional and alternative strategies for accessing business finance
 - attracting investment and/or investors to the business
 - understanding and preparing business plans, grant applications and other funding applications.
- Strategies for harnessing the benefits of social media and digital technology for business and also learning effective ways to filter information to find what is relevant or important.
- Confidence and strategies to implement improved and integrated succession arrangements. This was raised in multiple contexts but is particularly relevant in family businesses and community/industry organizations.

Women indicated that they would see significant value in programs that provided more opportunities for farm and rural businesswomen to interact and communicate, including through face-to-face

sessions, online (e.g. webinars) or via social media. There was a strong emphasis in discussions on the need for a well-designed and managed mentoring program that matched mentors to the needs of the mentee and involved women with a background in agribusiness. Workshop participants indicated that an ideal mentoring program would provide a mentor with whom to work through current priorities and needs, and a second mentor who could help them progress towards their longer term goals and aspirations.

To optimize the accessibility of future programs for rural women, workshop participants suggested:

- offering a mix of on- and off-line learning and networking opportunities
- carefully considering the logistics of programs to make it as easy as possible for women to attend (e.g. location, venue and timing)
- looking for ways to more widely roll-out the model of locally self-sustaining leadership and capacity building/personal development programs (similar to the model used by the South Burnett Community Leadership Program).

The workshops identified some broader opportunities that participants felt were worthwhile to pursue. One was the opportunity to raise the profile of the roles played by women in the contemporary farming sector through a marketing/communications campaign which could be designed and led by women. This was seen as having a dual benefit of contributing to a more general improvement in awareness of agriculture in the twenty-first century as a dynamic and technology-driven sector. A further key insight from the workshops was the opportunity to more directly enhance and harness the voices of farming women as communicators, story tellers, advocates, marketers, networkers, connectors and sharers.

Online survey findings

Survey results were compiled on 14 May 2018, with 149 responses received. The survey questions and results are provided at Appendix 5.

Profile of respondents

A strong majority of survey respondents (82%) reported that they are involved in an agricultural production business or farm. Over half (56%) indicated that they work both in the farm business as well as their own business or job. Interestingly, 59% of respondents said that they did not come from a family farming background.

The survey asked women to indicate areas of work and community life in which they are involved. A high proportion of respondents were involved in a family farm (50%) or other rural family business (20%). Others reported that they are involved in a (non-family) agricultural or rural business (17%) or a product or service provider to agricultural or rural businesses (16%). A small number of respondents were involved in government or university positions with connections to farm/rural businesses (11%) or the banking, insurance or superannuation industry (3%). Almost a third of respondents (29%) also indicated that they are involved in a community organisation.

Survey respondents were asked to identify their primary role. The most common primary role was within the family farm (48%). Other primary roles were with a product or service provider to agricultural or rural business (12%), other rural family business (11%), government or university positions with connections to farm/rural businesses (11%), other rural or agricultural business (9%), community organisation (7%) or the banking, insurance or superannuation industry (3%).

Most respondents were involved in cattle production (59.3%); horticulture (fruits, vegetables, nuts and herbs; 31.7%); and sugar production (17.1%). The remaining respondents were from fisheries, forestry,

sheep production, poultry production, pig production, dairy, eggs, wool, cereal and grains, other field crops and lifestyle horticulture.

Most respondents (53%) were aged between 31 and 50, 30% were 50 to 65, 14% were under 30 and 3% were over 65. The strong majority (85%) were married and 53% had dependent children.

The survey attracted women with high levels of education. Eighty-two percent of respondents held a tertiary qualification – 34% at degree level and 26% at post-graduate level.

Only 15% of survey respondents had attended a regional workshop linked to the project. This indicates that the survey significantly extended the reach of the project by connecting with an additional 123 women. A further indicator of the interest amongst rural women in engaging in leadership development focussed activities was the high number of respondents (85, or 58%) who provided their email address and requested to have further involvement in the project.

Business profile

Most respondents reported that their agricultural business is currently operating (63.4%) or growing (24.4%). A relatively small number of responses were received from businesses that are starting (8.1%), considering starting (2.4%) or closing (1.6%).

Currently, a very low proportion of respondents access only international markets for their product (4%), with a similar percentage reporting that they wish to access only international markets over the next five years (3%). Close to 60% of respondents currently access only the domestic market, and the remainder (38%) access both domestic and export markets.

When asked about the markets that they wished to access in the next five years this trend reversed: only 36% of respondents see their business as only accessing domestic markets in the future while 59% indicated they would like to diversify to include both domestic and international markets. These results indicate that farm business women have a very strong interest in building the knowledge and skills that will enable them to access export markets in the coming years.

Roles women play in farm businesses

Survey respondents were provided with a list of activities and were asked to rate their level of involvement in each of the roles on a scale ranging between strongly involved and not involved. Results were analysed by combining and ranking the responses of 'strongly involved' and 'quite involved' for each activity.

On this basis, the activities that women identified most strongly with were

- Every day running of the home and looking after family and children
- Managing the bookwork, accounts, finances and payroll
- Farm administration
- Longer-term financial planning
- Bringing new information or ideas to the decision-making table
- Marketing of the business / its products

These results confirm that women are highly involved in vast range of family responsibilities, off-farm responsibilities and farm activities including day to day financial management, long term financial planning and business planning. This reinforces the double bind and time constraints identified in regional workshops, which impacts the ability of women to become involved in other activities. The diversity of roles identified also demonstrates the range of relevant and transferable skills that women have to offer within other contexts.

Deeper insights into farm business women's roles and responsibilities

The survey provided an opportunity for women involved in agricultural enterprises to describe, in their own words, their main *responsibilities* in their business, the *value* they believe they bring to their business, and the *title* they use when introducing themselves.

Women's responsibilities: from strategic decisions to the daily grind

Some clear themes emerged from the words women used to describe their responsibilities in their agricultural business. From the 116 responses, some respondents (10) indicated they were involved in "everything" and "anything", however, the significant majority articulated specific areas of responsibility. Women also commonly characterised their responsibilities as demanding or consuming, challenging, and highly varied.

Financial management roles were the stand-out areas of responsibility identified, with 52 women (44%) including this in their response. While the majority of these women (43) noted their book keeping and day to day accounting roles, many (9) noted higher level responsibilities such as a focus on profitability and budgeting, or financial analysis and forecasting.

The second most common descriptors respondents used regarding their responsibilities in the business were in the areas of ownership, management, leadership and decision-making. Forty two women described responsibilities in these areas and their comments demonstrate they clearly position themselves as both integrally responsible for the successful operation of the business and essential for its smooth management.

The third most common responsibility women described was in the areas of production, operations and farm work, with 27 respondents noting this as one of their core areas of responsibility. This finding is interesting because it is in stark contrast to the dominant perception (and often self-perception) of women in farm business as not being strongly involved in hands-on, production roles. These responses reflect the results above, that many respondents to the survey saw themselves as primary or equal partners in the agricultural enterprise and actively involved in the physical work of farming.

The next most commonly identified responsibility was in business administration: 23 women noted administrative roles, including responsibilities for matters such as safety and compliance.

Other common responses included driving planning (both operational and strategic); marketing and sales; 'people' roles such as customer relations and human resource management; teaching and training; and bringing adaptive, innovative or entrepreneurial thinking to the business.

Only ten respondents described themselves as playing a "support" role – and most of these women also noted other responsibilities. This is another interesting finding because, again, the relatively small number of respondents using this descriptor is in contrast to the ways rural women are often understood to characterise their role. It may suggest that while women are likely to continue to recognise that they have a key role in supporting other family members in the business, they also increasingly recognising the value of the specific responsibilities they have across the farm business.

Women's value to agricultural business: essential but for some, unrecognised

The survey also asked women to describe, in their own words, the *value* they believed they contributed to their business. One hundred and fourteen women responded to this question.

Almost a third of respondents (36) described their value as essential, vital, valuable (or invaluable), important, necessary or foundational. These descriptions are consistent with the responsibilities women described in earlier survey questions.

The next strongest theme amongst respondents was bringing research, information, ideas, creativity or an alternative perspective to business decision-making: 17 responses were within this theme.

Responsibility and commitment was another prominent theme amongst the responses: 14 women characterised their value in this way, using words such as responsible, dedicated, commitment, tenacity, reliable and dependable. One respondent's description of her value was "blood, sweat and tears".

Other clear themes amongst the responses were driving innovation or the adoption of new technologies (13 responses); bringing order, management, organisation, structure and efficiency to the business (12 responses); providing forward thinking and strategising (11 responses); providing leadership, direction or vision (6); and driving profitability or managing budgets (6).

Another theme that stands out from the responses is the high number of women who saw an important part of their value as bringing energy, enthusiasm, optimism and a positive approach (11 responses) or motivation (2 responses). Six respondents indicated that they brought competence, expertise and professionalism to their business, while another six described their value as bringing balance or level-headedness.

A number of respondents indicated that they felt under-valued or unappreciated within their business or industry. Nine respondents described the value of their contribution using the descriptors: dog's body; essential, unvalued, unappreciated; underrated, integral, critical; huge .. unrecognised; undervalued, underestimated, convenient; nil, nil and nil acknowledged; highly valued within (but) not valued by many male farmers.

Job titles: from the boss lady to the kelpie dog

Finally, the survey asked women from agricultural enterprises, "what is the job title you generally use to introduce yourself when you meet new people"? This was an opportunity to explore this issue which has become a topical area of discussion in rural circles, and recently highlighted by National Farmers Federation chair, Fiona Simson (Simson, [2017](#)). From the 121 responses, the results indicate a clear shift away from women describing themselves as a farmer's wife (6 respondents) or farmer's daughter (3 respondents) and instead identifying as a farmer or farm business owner.

A third of respondents (41) said they introduced themselves as a farmer, grazier, grower or primary producer. Some of these respondents identified both as a farmer/grazier and their other professional role (7 respondents). Eleven respondents gave only their professional role (for example, teacher, nurse, agronomist or veterinarian). Reflecting the shift in emphasis in the agriculture industry towards a stronger business focus, almost 25% of respondents used the title of owner or business partner, director or principal (28 respondents).

Other common titles were manager or general manager (6 respondents) or an operational level manager, such as for finance, human resources, workplace health and safety, quality, administration or marketing (19 respondents).

Only 6 respondents (4%) indicated that do not have or do not use a title. Two respondents said they introduced themselves as a "Jill of all trades" or "I am everything from the boss lady to the kelpie dog", while three women identified themselves as the "shit kicker" – hopefully with a least a little of their tongue in their cheek!

"Through our work on the Invisible Farmer Project, we meet many women ... who perform a wide range of farm jobs, from indoor farm work, to outdoor farm work, to off-farm work, to work that is paid and work that is unpaid. Women on farms wear many hats, and their work is diverse and varied.

Some farm women ...tell us that they feel uncomfortable calling themselves a "farmer" because they aren't necessarily always outdoors or driving a tractor. There is a stereotype – a myth – that farming is only considered "farming" if it consists of outdoor manual work ...

If we are to break through myths and stereotypes, we need to acknowledge the diversity of work that is performed on farms. Some women drive tractors on farms on a daily basis, and some keep the farm running through their indoor contributions such as cooking, bookkeeping, managing farm contractors or making big decisions about farm operations. A lot of women ... say that they perform a combination of indoor and outdoor work, depending on the season and what is needed on any given day.

Everyone's farm experience is different, but the one thing we do know is that women make up half of the world's farming workforce, and in Australia they contribute to 49% of real farm income. Yet if you type the word "farmer" into Google today though, you will see that most of the images (around 90%) depict middle aged men standing out in fields or milking cows. Unfortunately, these images present a highly inaccurate depiction of farming that fails to include the work, stories and voices of Australian women."

(Invisible Farmer Project, 2018)

Current leadership activities

Of the list of leadership activities provided in the survey, respondents identified as being most confident (ranked from highest to lowest) in the areas of:

- The family farm business
- Mentor to younger or less experienced people
- Community or not for profit organisation board or leadership group
- In a service industry or support role to agriculture
- Other business / venture
- Diversification, innovation, value-adding or new areas of commercialisation within a farm or other business

Aspirations

When presented with the same list of leadership areas and asked to identify areas of future aspirations (that is, within the next 5 years), the most selected activities were:

- As a mentor to younger or less experienced people
- In the family farm business
- As a spokesperson or advocate for my industry or community
- Diversification, innovation, value-adding or new areas of commercialisation within a farm or other business
- On an industry association board, executive committee or R&D advisory committee
- In food or farm tourism
- On a government board or advisory forum.

The survey results indicate that women's strongest area of interest for playing a leadership role in the future was in a mentoring capacity: 46% of respondents identified this.

Very strong future aspirations were noted around playing leadership roles within the family farm business, in progressing business growth or transition or farm/food-based tourism.

The results also show that there is clear interest in leadership roles beyond the business, with a high proportion of respondents noting aspirations around becoming an industry or community advocate or spokesperson (35%) or taking on a leadership role in an industry context (31%), government board (28%) or community organisation (28%).

The activities selected as areas of future interest represents a mix of activities that were identified as areas of greatest confidence, and activities that respondents identified that they do not play a current leadership role. This highlights the importance of maintaining focus on areas that are already recognised as strengths, while introducing new development opportunities to support women's growth towards their aspirational goals.

The survey results further demonstrate the strong potential for women to build their presence in leadership spaces: over half (56%) indicated that they had a clear sense of their own leadership skills and qualities while 59% said they were confident to voice their opinion in a group or meeting context. Almost half of respondents (45%) indicated they would be confident to put themselves forward for a leadership role, while 57% believed they had the support of their partner, family or friends to do so. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents also noted that their membership of an industry association gave them valuable access to information and networks.

Motivations for taking on leadership roles

On average, each respondent selected 5 of the identified motivations for taking on additional leadership roles over the next 5 years.

70.3% of respondents indicated that they would take on leadership roles as a new challenge or opportunity to grow and learn.

More than 50% of respondents would take on a leadership role to make a positive change in the community or industry; as a way of giving back to the community or industry; to apply current skills and experience to a new space; or to make their own business as strong and successful as possible.

Barriers and enablers women experience regarding leadership

The survey tested the barriers and enablers identified through the regional workshops with regards to rural women playing or moving into leadership roles.

The survey results suggest that the barriers with which respondents most strongly identified were the lack of mentors and limited time. Only 26% of respondents indicated that they had a mentor or support person with whom to think through options and develop their capabilities. A high proportion of respondents indicated that they would like to take on wider leadership roles, but they were constrained by having limited time (69% agreed or strongly agreed) or needed to focus on other commitments or priorities in their family, business or work (53% agreed or strongly agreed). The need to re-invest in the business was noted as a factor that limited women's capacity to invest financially in personal or professional development: 50% agreed overall with this statement; 28% agreed or strongly agreed. At the end of the survey, one respondent commented, *"On farm pressures and isolation are hurdles that need to be overcome for many extremely intelligent and versatile rural women to be heard."*

It seems likely that succession planning in rural businesses is a relevant consideration in relation to women's opportunities to play or consider leadership roles. After accounting for respondents for whom business succession was not relevant (18%), one third agreed that the succession arrangements for the business (or lack of them) limit opportunities to grow as a leader in the family, business or industry. These results support workshop outcomes, where significant emphasis was placed on the degree to which succession impacted women's opportunities.

At a more general level, a high proportion of respondents agreed that there is insufficient attention or recognition of women's contributions to agricultural businesses and industries (47% agreed or strongly agreed), while 40% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that *"sometimes I feel that people disregard or underestimate my skills or knowledge because I am a woman"*.

A positive insight from the survey was the high proportion of survey participants who indicated they felt they had support systems and networks in place that enabled them to play or aspire to leadership roles.

Over half of respondents (56%) agreed or strongly agreed that they had a clear sense of the skills and qualities they do (or could) bring to a leadership role, while 45% agreed or strongly agreed that they would feel confident to put themselves forward for a leadership position. A high proportion of women indicated that they made active choices about where they spent time and resources to pursue their goals and interests (53%). Half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their *“ability to connect with people and to find or share information was one of [their] best assets”*.

External enablers that were highlighted through the survey included supportive networks. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their partner, family and friends support them to consider or play leadership roles; and that being a member of an industry association gave them valuable connections to people and information.

Personal and professional development needs

The survey explored the areas of skills or capacity development that rural women are interested in accessing. We asked what women would like to see from a leadership program targeted towards women in farm businesses and rural communities.

Consistent with the earlier findings presented in this report, the results show there is clear interest amongst rural women to access skills and capacity development in areas that would improve their wider leadership capabilities.

Respondents indicated a strong level of interest in improving their capacity to write successful grant or funding applications (48%) and further develop skills in negotiation, communication and conflict management (46%). There was also interest in building self-confidence (44%) and skills in corporate governance and board directorship (39%). Improving skills in using social media was also identified as an area of interest: for sharing stories from rural businesses, industries and communities with an urban audience (39%) and for rural advocacy (36%).

The results also point to important areas of skills or capacity development need with a stronger business focus. Exploring strategies to pursue business growth, diversification, transition or value adding was confirmed as a high area of interest (48%) as well as skills in developing business plans that are effective and help attract investment (43%). The strong interest in grant writing, negotiation skills and building self-confidence reported above are also highly relevant in a business context. Other strong areas of interest (38%) included harnessing digital technologies, mechanization, automation and sensing, accessing business coaching or financial advice, and further developing core business management skills. Using social media for marketing was also identified as important (32%).

"In 2007 I applied for and was given the position of Head Stockman at Quinyambie Station north of Broken Hill on the edge of the Strzelecki desert. Quinyambie Station is 1200km squared. It runs 1200 head of cattle. The manager Paul used to say if you couldn't do something you needed to try it the other way. Work it out and use your head, you have one for a reason. All of the stock work was done on motor bikes, which I was extremely inexperienced at. So ask yourself why did Paul Jonas give a 24 year old girl who could not ride a motorbike the position as Head Stockman on Quinyambie Station? Because I was the best goddam person for the job! Not the best woman! Not the best man! The best person – I had experience, I knew cattle and I was not dumb.

....

Today I look around and see young women doing great things and planning for a career in the agriculture or farming in every field. BUT I still find the board rooms and corporate sector wanting. On average in Australia's peak state agriculture lobby groups women only represent 20% of the boardroom. Is the government hearing our voices? Is the consideration made that a woman's perspective may be different?

Women's contributions to the farming economy are difficult to calculate specifically! Our roles are so diverse. Apart from direct contributions like labour and administration, we need to calculate the hours of unpaid domestic work, the contribution of off-farm jobs and the value of moral support. Possibly it is we women who undervalue our own contributions too! Maybe we need to own it and start with ourselves and appreciate ourselves for the effort we put in! If women think that they are an unimportant undervalued cog in the wheel of farming then stop doing it all and see what happens!"

(Shannon, 2018)

Perspectives on the design of a rural women's leadership development program

The survey gathered detailed information regarding respondent's' perspectives about valuable elements for a leadership program targeted towards rural women. One hundred and thirteen women provided comments to this open question. Most comments indicated that a program tailored to address women's interests and needs would be valued. There were, however, a few respondents who cautioned against an over-emphasis on gender-based approaches:

"Stop focusing on under representation of women and focus on developing skills. Best qualified person should get the job regardless of sex. I grew up in legal industry and have never experienced the men's club simply because I never accepted it or looked for it ... Women today can do anything they want if they try".

"It's important to support rural families and communities, not just rural women, as it is healthy partnerships that make us stronger businesses and communities".

Regarding program design and style of program delivery, there was a clear call for flexible delivery, with preference for a mix of face-to-face sessions and web-based, self-paced learning. Many noted the need to ensure affordability or access to funding to optimize opportunities for women's participation. Some highlighted the importance of local access. Other important elements were the inclusion of women, particularly established female rural leader, in program delivery; authenticity; and a rural focus. Importantly, however, some respondents also noted the value of incorporating whole of supply chain perspectives and insights from other industries:

"Broad experiences of the entire supply chain. A lot of people are not aware of what opportunities are available in the industry nor the importance of it".

Some respondents noted the need to include options in the design of any future program for participants to both learn and have opportunities to put their learning into immediate practice. Related ideas included the need to more clearly map out pathways to leadership roles, opportunities for emerging leaders to shadow current leaders, and making active efforts to improve succession planning in existing leadership groups. A few respondents noted the importance of offering training programs that would be recognized or contribute towards formal qualifications. Some comments from the survey that reflect these perspectives include:

"A grounded support network, a space to actively learn new skills, support to apply newly learnt skills back in the community, face to face learning, motivational influencers".

"Networking or to create new opportunities for me to then employ my leadership ability".

"The ability to have written acknowledgement of any courses or workshops attended for future work opportunities".

"The lack of meaty senior roles in regional communities makes it difficult to transition to a fulfilling role and continue to develop professionally outside of the family farm".

In regards to the focus of potential future programs, the clearest theme within the comments was for a mentoring component and creation of opportunities for women to shadow a person in a leadership position. More than twenty respondents noted this, for example:

"Mentoring and coaching; work shadowing. [A program would be valuable] if it is more than another talk-fest. If it acknowledges the substantial experience of mature women and gives them a voice, as well as valuing the potential of young ones with limited experience".

"Acknowledging the role women have played, and are playing in agriculture, and by having mentors from the industry".

The second most common theme within the responses was for a program that addressed board and corporate governance skills. The idea of providing guidance on the pathways to board or senior leadership roles was linked to these comments and also the need for immediate opportunities to directly apply newly developed leadership skills. Some comments included:

"Understanding how boards work and how to be considered for a position on one and what steps I need to take to improve my skills. Mentorship, networks, conflict resolution".

"Linkage with an industry organization in order to put the learnings into practice. Great to develop skills but disheartening if commitment doesn't follow through to industry uptake".

"Firstly that all training didn't stop at the weird magical age of 35. Many women are in the midst of child raising still then and it is harder to access such opportunities. Also there isn't often spare/vacant seats in

board roles until people are much older so you can be all trained up with nowhere to go, and often considered too young to contribute. Have a succession strategy forward. A clear list of leadership opportunities that we could aspire to. Sometimes it is a case of you don't know what you don't know..ie you don't know of an opportunity. Better broader sharing of opportunities”.

A number of respondents specifically highlighted the importance of creating opportunities for women to develop advanced leadership skills and to build their capacity for strategic thinking. One respondent suggested a program would be valuable if it was:

“Designed to develop strong supportive relationships that endure over time. Broadening perspectives on what 'leadership' is. Significant practice in expressing thinking. Practices for develop good quality ideas. How to work collaboratively. Preparing for a future different to now”.

Other strong themes within the responses were around communication skills (in business, representation and advocacy contexts), networking and network building; building confidence and influence; achieving balance and optimising time management; resolving conflict and dealing with difficult people; and personal development and resilience building.

“How to balance the competing demands on a woman's time, ie. I have children at school, university, our own ag-tech business, involvement in family beef production farm, ageing parents and the succession involved in that, a desire to be more involved in the industry as suggested by this survey. How do I achieve all this???”

A large number of responses focused more directly on business management skills, such as driving the development of business strategy; planning and implementing business diversification or transition opportunities; negotiation; grant writing and attracting investment or investors; and succession planning. Another theme was around exploring options and implementation strategies for emerging agricultural technologies and innovation.

A few respondents identified the need to more directly engage with men as an essential strategy for supporting the development and progression of women in leadership roles. Some examples include:

“Making men in agriculture appreciate the significant capabilities of women”.

“Training/education for the men that often dominate the existing leadership ranks and largely control the hiring process”.

These responses offer clear guidance for elements to consider in the development of future programs aimed towards supporting leadership development capabilities amongst farm businesswomen in Queensland.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project has generated important insights in two key areas: rural women's strengths, interests and on-going needs in their roles as business managers and leaders; and more broadly, their aspirations and development needs in the context of wider leadership roles.

Business management and leadership

Regarding women's interests and needs in a business management and leadership context, a number of observations can be made.

Women are strongly involved in rural and farm businesses and play multiple, diverse roles. Farm businesswomen tend to have highly diverse skill sets, but often have particular strengths in financial management (both operational and strategic). They are often the organizers in the business – but also bring new information and creative ideas to the business strategy.

Because of the roles they play in agricultural businesses, farming women are well positioned to see the weaknesses and strengths of the business, and opportunities for future directions. This project has clearly demonstrated that farming women are actively involved in managing farm businesses that are long-established and often in a renewal stage. In this context, many are a driving force to pursue diversification, transition, new areas of growth, new market opportunities (including export markets), and innovation.

The current emphasis of many programs on supporting entrepreneurialism and start-ups, therefore, is not well matched to the needs of many women in farm businesses. The findings from this project suggest that, in order to better service agricultural enterprises, business programs need to focus on supporting the process of renewal for mature businesses and, in particular, supporting the women driving this process. It is acknowledged, however, that some farming women are pursuing their own new business ventures – and recent initiatives such as the WiRES program and events hosted through the Advancing Women in Business program have provided valuable support in these circumstances.

Another important insight from this project is that women involved in farm businesses often come to these roles from other backgrounds and other qualifications. Because of this, farming women are actively looking for ways to help them develop the skills and knowledge they need *now* and, in particular, to help them implement the kinds of business transitions outlined above. The project findings demonstrate farming women are highly interested in accessing business coaching, mentoring, training and gaining relevant qualifications. There is an urgent need to improve accessibility and affordability of relevant training and skills development programs for farming women and to remove barriers to their access to subsidized training courses. For example, subsidized training is often restricted to those who do not hold any qualifications. This excludes many female farm business managers who have a historical qualification in a trade or profession but now need to build knowledge and skills in new areas that enable them to plan and implement strategies that bring growth and renewal to their mature farm business. A customized farm business mentoring program would also add significant value to the agriculture sector – and this project demonstrates that there is a strong pool of women willing to be mentors and many women who would highly value the opportunity to have a coach or mentor.

Recommendations for supporting farming women's business management and leadership capabilities

- QFF, DAF and Office of Small Business should consider the findings of this project and collaborate towards refining existing programs and designing future programs to ensure the needs of farm/rural businesswomen are met through the Advancing Small Business in Queensland Strategy, the Advancing Women in Business initiative, and other Queensland Government initiatives.
- Encourage the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance (RJSA) to consider the findings of this project and advance efforts to ensure farm business businesswomen can access the training and skills development opportunities they are seeking.
- Enhance existing mentoring programs to ensure the specific business mentoring needs of farm businesswomen and other rural business women are met. Mentors need to be well matched to women's specific needs, interests and business stage/direction.

Broader leadership opportunities

Further observations can be made regarding farm and rural businesswomen's wider leadership roles, future aspirations and support needs.

Firstly, it is clear that this group of women have strong experience in senior management and leadership roles. For many, this experience has been in business and local community spaces. The workshops and survey identified that there already is a strong pool of women across Queensland who are confident, capable, qualified and ready now to take on higher level leadership roles.

The project findings also demonstrate that many women from farming and rural business backgrounds have a strong interest in building their presence and influence across a wide range of leadership spaces (in business, community, industry and government levels). These women are actively looking for opportunities to refine and apply their leadership and management skills. They are particularly looking for mentoring, but have also indicated interest in learning more about corporate governance and practical guidance on how to be an effective board director or other senior or executive level leader. Based on the findings of this project, it could be estimated that there is a pool of 25-30% of the population of farm businesswomen who would be willing to apply for senior/exec leadership roles on boards and higher-level committees. What is lacking for these women is clarity on how to go about it. Also lacking is an obvious effort by leadership groups to pull women through to these roles and support them to 'learn the ropes'.

Another useful insight from the workshops, is that a level of confusion is emerging for farm women related to the proliferation of women's networks and organizations that are establishing across national, state and regional scales. From the ground level, it is quite difficult for women to know where to put their membership, effort, energy.

A further insight from the project, and in particular the resources list, is that while there are leadership development programs available that are offered through industry organizations and others (such as the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation), these usually operate at a national scale. For Queensland-based farm businesswomen who have talent and potential but who are also currently highly embedded in multiple family, business and professional responsibilities (and often local to state-level wider leadership roles), nominating to participate in a national scale leadership development program is a step too far. The findings of this project suggest that women in rural Queensland would benefit from more localized leadership and personal development opportunities, delivered through a mix of face-to-face and online learning forums.

Recommendations for supporting farm and rural business women's wider leadership potential

- To support Queensland's farm and rural business women to reach their full potential longer-term investment and commitment is needed to establish and maintain a well-designed leadership development program that targets women's needs and can be delivered at local, regional and state-wide scales. Such a program could be designed to feed into the higher level programs. There would be value in QFF, QRRRW, DAF, Office of Small Business and other relevant agencies working together to address this need.
- As a priority, mentoring/shadowing arrangements should be implemented in existing leadership groups to bring through emerging female leaders from the agriculture and rural community sector. QFF and its member organizations can show leadership in this area by implementing measures to actively bring women into industry leadership roles.
- Another practical and valuable first step is to invest in mapping the pathways farm and rural businesswomen can take to leadership roles.
- While the project has found there is an existing pool of leaders amongst farm businesswomen, and strong potential to support a pipeline of developing leaders, it must also be recognized that because women juggle multiple roles and responsibilities efforts must be made to support transitions, improved succession planning (in multiple contexts), and support women implement delegation strategies and capacity building at grassroots levels.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Workshop guest speaker biographies

Jess Fealy, Blue Sky Produce



Jess wears many hats. A qualified chartered accountant, Jess grew up on a dairy farm and is now a farm wife and mum of four, at Blue Sky Produce, a family owned and operated mango, avocado and lime orchard in Mareeba.

She is also the founder of 'Back Paddock Business' which provides business and communications support to rural enterprises. She lives and breathes social media and believes there are real benefits to be gained for rural and remote businesses in the online space.

Jess works part-time as the Digital Media and Communications officer for her local council, and in her spare time she is a 'View from the Paddock' columnist for the QLD Country Life newspaper and the Volunteer Blogging Team Director for 'Country to Canberra' www.countrytocanberra.com.au whose aim is to empower young, rural women to reach their leadership potential.

Jess is also a driving team member with Startup Tablelands <https://www.startuptablelands.org> whose mission it is to enable innovation and entrepreneurship in rural and remote communities.

In 2017 Jess was a RIRDC Rural Women's Award finalist for Queensland.

Krista Watkins, Natural Evolution



Krista is Co-Founder and Managing Director of Natural Evolution. Natural Evolution was the first company to commercially produce banana flour and has pioneered the banana by-product industry leading the world in research, innovation and food technology.

Tanya Atkinson, Yunique Management



Tanya is an Agribusiness Strategy Advisor – specialising in people, banks & succession.

As an executive coach, with over 15 years in business management & banking experience, Tanya is passionate about equipping business & agribusiness owners with the tools to achieve their goals both for themselves & their business.

With her extensive banking experience, she is fluent in speaking the foreign language she refers to as "bank speak". She knows how to ensure you're getting the most value from your financiers. She works with clients to identify & manage their business risks today, to develop & fund their vision for tomorrow.

Jodie Redcliffe, Australian Chicken Growers' Council



Jodie and her husband Wayne Redcliffe operated a commercial broiler farm in Wamuran for 27 years. In July this year they sold their farm, which has been a huge change. Jodie is now concentrating on her roles as President and Executive Officer of the Queensland Chicken Growers Association and Vice-President of the Australian Chicken Growers Council.

In 2013 Jodie was awarded a Nuffield scholarship, then published and presented a paper titled: 'Something to Crow About: What can Poultry farmers do to answer consumer perceptions and pressures facing our industry?' In 2015 Jodie was chosen by Nuffield Australia to lead groups of farmers on a 10 day study tours to Japan, marrying her ability to speak Japanese with her interest in agricultural learning. This is now an annual tour. In 2017, Jodie was awarded a scholarship grant to undertake a Women in Leadership course aimed at better equipping women to be effective leaders.

Tina McPherson, Passionfruit Australia



Tina and her husband Bruce McPherson are partners in TinaBerries, growing strawberries and passionfruit. Tina and Bruce worked and travelled extensively in New Zealand and south-east Asia with their young family before choosing to settle in the fertile fields near Bundaberg.

Tina has also established Arable Adventures which provides an opportunity for rural women to explore the diversity of farming and rural life in exciting new locations through organized overseas tours <https://www.facebook.com/arable.adventures/>

Tina is also the chair of Passionfruit Australia.

Appendix 2: Resource list

Self-assessment tools	<p>There is a range of free online leadership self-assessment material available, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_01.htm • www.super-thinkers.com/assement-tool/737/ • www.trainingcoursematerial.com/free-assessment-tools/leadership-styles-questionnaire • www.dummies.com/business/human-resources/employee-relations/how-to-assess-your-leadership-style/ • www.my.makeadentleadership.com/leadership-quizzes-self-assessments/ <p>Or google for more...</p> <p>The assessment tools tend to group questions and/or statement into themes including personal qualities; working with others; managing and improving services; setting direction; and strategic vision and delivery. Assessment outcomes give either a quantitative or qualitative assessment of leadership style and some identify areas for further development.</p> <p>Queensland Office of Small Business, Advancing Women in Business initiative (www.dtesb.qld.gov.au/small-business/advancing-women-in-business) links to resources including a Business Readiness Quiz, and a Business Skills Checklist</p>
Business planning tools	<p>Queensland Government business planning tools (www.business.qld.gov.au) links to resources including starting and running a business; business planning; finance; legal obligations; insurances; marketing & sales; labour hire etc</p> <p>DAF web based tools (www.daf.qld.gov.au/plants/fruit-and-vegetables) links to resources including Agbiz (commodity specific whole-farm budgeting tools); farm management information; supply chain innovation; disaster recovery & relief</p> <p>Queensland Office of Small Business, Advancing Women in Business initiative</p>

	<p>(www.dtesb.qld.gov.au/small-business/advancing-women-in-business) provides resources including tools and skills for women to successfully start and grow business; business planning and market research tools; business webinars (Getting into business, Managing your business, Essentials for business success, Social media and your business, Digital economy)</p>
	<p>Rabobank (www.rabobank.com.au) provide resources including business management and succession planning</p>
	<p>Industry associations (e.g. Growcom www.growcom.com.au; QFF www.qff.org.au)</p>
	<p>Rural Consulting Group (www.ruralconsultinggroup.com.au/services)</p>
Entrepreneurship	<p>The WiRE program (www.wireprogram.com)</p>
	<p>Advance Queensland (www.advance.qld.gov.au)</p>
	<p>Inspiring Rare Birds (www.inspiringrarebirds.com)</p>
	<p>SproutX (The home of Australian Agtech: www.sproutx.com.au)</p>
	<p>She Starts (www.shestarts.com)</p>
	<p>Blue Chilli (www.bluechilli.com)</p>
Leadership development tools/programs	<p>Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarships (www.nuffield.com.au)</p>
	<p>Australian Rural Leadership Foundation – Agribusiness Leadership Program (www.rural-leaders.org.au/our-programs/agribusiness)</p>
	<p>Women and Leadership Australia & Horticulture Innovation Australia joint scholarships for Women’s Leadership Development (www.wla.edu.au/scholarships/horticulture.html)</p>
	<p>Women & Leadership Australia Emerging Leaders</p>

Human resources	www.wla-emergingleaders.com.au
	Rural Training Initiatives www.ruraltraininginitiatives.com.au
	AgriFutures Horizon Scholarships www.rirdc.gov.au/people-leadership/horizon-scholarship
	Country to Canberra (for young rural women: www.countrytocanberra.com.au)
	AustSafe Super (www.austsafe.com.au) provides seminars, online resources and financial advice including resources to support employers
	Industry associations (e.g. Growcom www.growcom.com.au ; QFF www.qff.org.au)
	Finance/Budget
	AustSafe Super (www.austsafe.com.au) provides seminars, online resources and financial advice
	Rabobank (www.rabobank.com.au)
	Industry associations (e.g. Growcom www.growcom.com.au ; QFF www.qff.org.au)
Governance	Women on Boards (www.womenonboards.net/en-AU/home)
Risk	Industry associations (e.g. Growcom www.growcom.com.au ; QFF www.qff.org.au)
Mentoring	Queensland Office of Small Business, Advancing Women in Business initiative (www.dtesb.qld.gov.au/small-business/advancing-women-in-business) runs a Mentoring for Growth program
	The WiRE program (www.wireprogram.com)
	Women on Boards (www.womenonboards.net/en-AU/home)
Networking	Rabobank (www.rabobank.com.au)

	Queensland Rural Regional and Remote Women's Network (www.qrrrwn.org.au)
	The WiRE program (www.wireprogram.com)
	Industry associations (e.g. Growcom www.growcom.com.au ; QFF www.qff.org.au)
	Women on Boards (www.womenonboards.net/en-AU/home)
	Femeconomy reciprocal promotion opportunities (www.femeconomy.com)
Grants/Funding	The Queensland Business Grants and Assistance Finder (www.qld.gov.au/businessgrants) is an online tool that uses a series of questions to provide information about grants or funding that might be available to assist you to grow your business
	Queensland Office of Small Business, Advancing Women in Business initiative (www.dtesb.qld.gov.au/small-business/advancing-women-in-business) provides grants for women to successfully start and grow business
Need more inspiration.....?	Rural Women's Award (www.agrifutures.com.au/people-leadership/rural-womens-award)
	The Invisible Farmer Project (www.invisiblefarmer.net.au)
	National Rural Women's Coalition (www.nrwc.com.au)
	Queensland Country Women's Association (www.qcwa.org.au)
	Insights Women in Family Business eBook (www.insights.org.au/women-in-family-business)
	Australian Centre for Leadership for Women (www.leadershipforwomen.com.au/)

Femeconomy (www.femeconomy.com)

TED Talks:

- Kristen Pressner “Are you biased? I am”
(www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq_xYSOZrgU)
- Sheryl Sandberg “Why we have too few women leaders”
(www.ted.com/talks/sheryl_sandberg_why_we_have_too_few_women_leaders)
- Fields Wicker-Miurin “Learning from leadership’s missing manual”
(www.ted.com/talks/fields_wicker_miurin_learning_from_leadership_s_missing_manual)
- Drew Dudley “Everyday leadership”
(www.ted.com/talks/drew_dudley_everyday_leadership)
- David Logan “Tribal leadership”
(www.ted.com/talks/david_logan_on_tribal_leadership)
- Roselinde Torres “What it takes to be a great leader”
(www.ted.com/talks/roselinde_torres_what_it_takes_to_be_a_great_leader)
- Verna Myers “How to overcome our biases? Walk boldly towards them”
(www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_toward_them)
- Anne-Marie Slaughter “Can we all “have it all”?”
(www.ted.com/talks/anne_marie_slaughter_can_we_all_have_it_all)
- Care Anderson “Be an opportunity maker”
(www.ted.com/talks/kare_anderson_be_an_opportunity_maker)
- Carol Dweck “The power of believing you can improve”
(www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve)
- Amy Jo Martin “Innovate your life”
(www.tedxseattle.com/talks/innovate-your-life/)
- Margaret Heffernan “Why it’s time to forget workplace pecking order”
(www.ted.com/talks/margaret_heffernan_why_it_s_time_to_forget_the_pecking_order_at_work)
- Elizabeth Gilbert “Your elusive creative genius”
(www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_gilbert_on_genius)

Media:

- A Study of the Champagne Industry Shows That Women Have Stronger Networks, and Profit from Them (Harvard Business Review: www.hbr.org/2017/07/a-study-of-the-champagne-industry-shows-that-women-have-stronger-networks-and-profit-from-them)
- Lots of Companies Still Have No Senior Executives Who Are Women (Harvard Business Review: www.hbr.org/2017/03/lots-of-companies-still-have-no-senior-executives-who-are-women)
- Corporate gender equality: Why boards need more women to make more money: www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-17/why-boards-need-more-women-to-make-more-money/8809222

Appendix 3: Partner's meeting summary

2pm - 4.30pm Thursday 10 August, QFF Boardroom

<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
Diana Saunders, Queensland Farmers Federation	Nerida Sweetapple, Rabobank
Jane Muller, Queensland Farmers Federation/Growcom	Eric Danzi, Qld Dairy Farmers
Terri Birrell (for Kirrily Macgill) Office of Small Business	Michael Murray, Cotton Australia
Dan Galligan, CANEGROWERS	Shane Holborn, Flower Association Qld
Kerry Battersby, Nursery & Garden Industry Assn	
Rachel Mackenzie, Growcom	
Bec Tkai, Qld Chicken Growers Assn	
Stephanie Slade, DAF	
Karyn Mankeltow, DAF	
Alison Mobbs, QRRRW	
Stacey Watson, AustSafe Super	
Nadine Marshall, CSIRO (by phone)	
Jess Fealy, Blue Sky Produce / Rural Women's Award (by phone)	

Actions

- Send in information / resources to include in the leadership tree framework and resource list.
- Send through ideas for workshop speakers

- Notify Jane of any dates in October to avoid and/or any industry events that women's workshops could be aligned with

Discussion notes

Welcome and project background

Participant introductions

- Nadine Marshall
 - Background in social research focussed on agricultural industries in Northern Australia and/or the GBR catchments
 - Research highlights the diverse roles women play in agricultural industries and rural communities and therefore the importance of providing opportunities for women to further develop their capacities and resilience
- Jess Fealy
 - Business partner in Blue Sky Produce, Queensland finalist in the 2017 Rural Women's Award
 - Strong interest in harnessing social media to pursue business and community goals
- Stephanie Slade
 - Horticulture role at DAF
 - Thinking about what QG/DAF can do beyond supporting the rural women's award to help women achieve more
- Karyn Mankeltow
 - Coordinate the Queensland component of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award
 - Also have a trade and processed foods role at DAF
- Terri Birrell
 - Office of Small Business
 - Excited about the prospect of working with diverse partners on the "Advancing Women in Business" initiative
- Kerry Battersby
 - Women play significant roles in production nursery businesses – keen to support projects that support these women to achieve more
- Rachel Mackenzie
 - Growcom is a passionate advocate for raising the profile of women in horticulture; supportive of efforts to boost professional development for industry women
- Bec Tkal
 - Qld chicken meat industry has some very strong women in business: in many cases, the men run the farm while the women run the business – and often run other businesses or professional roles as well
 - Also have qualifications in public policy and gender studies
- Diana Saunders
 - Workforce planning and policy role with QFF
 - Also have a background in social research, including women in sugar
- Dan Galligan
 - Canegrowers organisation keen to boost the involvement of women in industry leadership positions – partly because it is recognised that women often play a driving role in pursuing innovation and adaption at farm business and industry levels. Made a significant effort to attract women to industry boards, but currently only have 6% representation.
- Stacey Watson

- Cane farmer's daughter, so inherently understand this landscape
- AustSafe is highly supportive of its rural industries and, in particular, women's initiatives

Jane provided some background comments about the project

Group discussion: context for leadership development in intensive ag industries and the barriers/constraints women face

- Many industry women have strong capabilities and skills and amongst many women there is quite a high level of interest in moving into more leadership positions.
- However, women also face significant barriers to entry into leadership roles, such as industry board positions. Barriers discussed included:
 - Some women do not have enough confidence to imagine or to nominate themselves for a leadership role / board directors position
 - It is daunting to join a board that is 100% male
 - There is a strongly masculine/patriarchal vibe in many industries or boards
 - Amongst male leaders there is a lot of grandstanding and ego
 - An indirect barrier is that men often bring negative feedback home from board meetings, which acts as a disincentive for other family members to consider a directors' role
 - Nominating for a board / leadership position requires an application process which involves providing a resume or written description of your career history/description. Many farm businesswomen have never had a need to prepare a resume and many do not have the skills/knowledge/ confidence to write a resume / nomination form / application letter.
 - Basic issues around child care and family responsibilities
 - Digital technology is still not sufficiently developed or reliable to overcome the tyranny of distance for rural/remote women to participate efficiently in decision-making or representational forums.
 - There are real costs to participation, for families and for businesses. For many leadership/advocacy/representative roles, there is no opportunity to have your expenses of participation and travel reimbursed.
 - For some, there are basic skill gaps: many people are not confident about meeting procedures, how to chair a meeting, understanding governance requirements.
- Women often realise that they can be strongly influential *without* being in a formal leadership position. Women tend to use alternative pathways to achieve their goals or pursue an agenda.

Industry perspectives

- Cane industry:
 - Have many boards at regional and state level – so there are many opportunities for women. However, it has been difficult to encourage women to nominate for board roles (largely to do with some of the barriers outlined above).
 - Has an active and engaged “Women in Sugar” network which also runs a state conference
 - Women in Sugar groups are established in most production regions. The most active networks are in Herberton, Burdekin, Mackay and Bundaberg. These groups often run professional development activities and there is also a state conference.
- Horticulture industry
 - Have run Women in Horticulture professional development and networking events in production regions over a number of years. Some regions have a stronger interest in the social aspects, whereas others have a stronger focus on business skills development.

- Nursery industry
 - Have a number of rigorous industry programs that deal with a range of management issues, but nothing with a specific gender focus.
 - The industry has a highly dynamic branch network.
 - Nursery industry is also quite distinctive because it is highly peri-urban.
 - Many women are (successful) business owner/operators in their own right, so they are not overly concerned about a need to change the perception of the industry as 'male dominated'. However, in the south-east, there are a larger number of businesswomen who have had a negative experience of 'the boys club' or discriminatory behaviour. It seems that business operators to the north/sunshine coast might be a little stronger/more resilient and would have a stronger interest in professional development opportunities.
 - The NGIQ has an 8-member board, with 2 women. It needs to be acknowledged that the time commitment for anyone on a board is very difficult to manage.
- Chicken meat industry
 - The leadership levels are fairly male-dominated.
 - Some of the strong women in the industry (such as Jodie, who has recently retired) were only able to move into their leadership roles when their children grew older/more independent.
 - Many of the younger women in the industry who have leadership potential have family commitments and are also managing a second business or professional job.
 - Because the industry is located close to the major centres (SEQ, Atherton Tablelands), the tyranny of distance is less of an issue and industry women may not be overly concerned about gender imbalances at the leadership level.
 - There is a strong interest amongst women in the industry in professional development opportunities such as improving business management skills.
 - Both men and women experience the challenges associated with being in industry leadership roles. Once in a leadership position, people often feel trapped in it. There are often no obvious people to take over – so leadership succession is a significant need.
- QRRRWN
 - There are significant costs involved in getting time away from your home and business to participate in decision-making or representative forums. For Alison to attend a 3-hour meeting in Brisbane, requires three days away from home and business and organising and paying for staff to cover three days of shifts.
 - Men face similar costs and inconveniences, but women seem to feel those pressures more intrinsically.
 - There is a definite need for support systems to help new committee members or board directors to "learn the ropes"
- DAF
 - The project has not been framed around a 'deficit model', and in seeking to support leadership development in the ag industries there is no overt intent to exclude male leaders. But the project does seek to recognise that there are many talented, high potential women who could make a valuable contribution but who may not recognise or fully value their skills/capacity. The project offers a chance to get women like this better engaged in opportunities for growth and development.

Leadership framework and preliminary analysis of available leadership/business programs

- Stephanie presented the 'tree' framework that is being developed to help communicate some key ideas at the regional workshops:
 - The leafy parts of the tree help to represent the range of 'leadership' spaces that are open to farm businesswomen, and to avoid giving a sense of priority or hierarchy to formal/board positions.
 - The trunk represents the core skills necessary in any leadership role
 - The branches represent the idea that some leadership positions require specific knowledge/skills and there are different pathways available to follow to pursue them
 - The roots show the kinds of attributes or resources that ground or support a person to be successful or resilient in a leadership role
 - The clouds are a way to for participants to think about what their aspirations, motivations or passions are; what goals they might be reaching for or aiming to achieve.
 - Each area of leadership (identified by a colour coded dot), matches with a listing of resources / courses / programs that women might tap into to help them pursue their goals
- There was generally positive feedback regarding the proposed framework. Partners agreed it offered a good platform to build from and would be an effective way to stimulate discussion and thinking at the workshops.
- Stephanie invited the partners to send through any references, resources or information that could be added.
- Kerry recommended Family Business Australia. This organisation is highly aligned with the challenges farm businesspeople face and have excellent resources, including family business advisors. May have people who could speak at the workshops.
- Stacey suggested including information about superannuation / personal finance / income protection and life insurances to acknowledge/address the gender gap in super and/or the specific issues women need to navigate such as situations where family business needs to be broken up/sold

On-line survey

- Jane opened the discussion regarding this component of the project.
 - The survey is an opportunity to engage a much larger proportion of the population – has the potential to add another significant data-source.
 - QRRRWN/WiRES have recently conducted a major online survey of rural women to assess aspirations/needs around business development and management. These results will be highly informative for the QFF project – and enables our survey to strongly focus on leadership questions.
 - There are significant risks around the survey component: farming businesses are bombarded by on-line surveys so there could be some fatigue/disinterest; our target audience is time poor so the survey will need to be carefully designed.
 - We need to determine the best timing: should the survey be run concurrently with the workshops or after them.
- Alison commented that if the survey is tapping into an area of genuine interest and is properly marketed/introduced, women will participate in it.
- Nadine provided some advice from a social research perspective
 - It is hard to ask for a 30 minute commitment from a prospective survey participant. A 10 minute survey will probably generate a higher participation rate and should be achievable to design. The survey must honour/value the participants' time. If a person enjoys doing the survey, they are likely to recommend it to their friends.

- There are well-established techniques available that allow the researcher to generate lots of valuable information quickly such as a well-developed set of agree/disagree statements. Nadine feels confident that she could draft some potential questions.
- Always pilot the proposed questionnaire to test the questions. The members of the partners forum would be ideal for this.
- A good questionnaire is designed to test a clear set of hypotheses. So an important task for the project team is to articulate our assumptions and hypotheses.
- Build the questionnaire on prior knowledge regarding leadership aspirations and constraints. If there is capacity in the project to conduct a literature review, this would be very helpful.
- Barriers are interesting – because they are actually perceptions of barriers. Open ended questions may not yield very useful insights. Structured questions can be embedded in a broader context that help reveal deeper assumptions/perceptions. Consider scoping the questions with a broader group
- There should be good potential for a high response rate – optimise participation by casting a very wide net from all the QFF member groups and other project partners.
- Some specific considerations:
 - Be alert to the risk that the workshops or survey might raise issues that we don't have the capacity to address (cultural issues or family conflicts). We can reduce this risk by carefully focussing on matters that we can manage.
 - The research suggests that only about 16% of the agriculture population has strongly developed skills in strategic thinking; the busyness of farm business also limits the time that people can spend on strategising. The research also indicates that women may be better placed to drive a more strategic approach to business / are more inclined to take on strategic planning roles. The team could consider how the project could support this further?
 - Nadine's research also indicates that the idea of "identity" is highly relevant to this project. Men tend to have a narrower sense of identity or 'hats' that they are comfortable wearing. Women, however, tend to be more adept at wearing many hats – and can switch hats more easily, especially in times of crisis. The workshop/project is an opportunity to discuss this with women and help them to recognise that this is a strength that they can more actively harness.
- Alison suggested that we could consider a two-part survey. The first would be focussed on collecting baseline data and validating our assumptions regarding women's needs/barriers. The second could follow the analysis/recommendations phase of the project to test what we think we would like to "take to market".
- Alison noted that the WiRES survey achieved 200% of its participation rate target – in spite of it being a 25 minute survey. It has yielded a valuable snapshot of rural businesswomen's needs which will drive the ongoing design/delivery for the program.
- Diana agreed that the team should invest in determining what assumptions / hypotheses we want to test.
- Partners discussed the timing of the survey and agreed that the project will get optimal value from the survey if we run it after the regional workshops. The workshops will help to scope the issues that need to be further explored in the survey.

Workshop planning

- Reviewed QFF member industry locations; discussed the challenge of selecting four workshop locations because intensive farming occurs across Queensland – but there is also a strong concentration of intensive industries in the south-east corner.
- Partners agreed that workshops should be planned for
 - Atherton Tablelands (Mareeba)
 - Bundaberg
 - Toowoomba
 - Sunshine Coast (southern end)
- Also agreed that the option of an additional (75 minute) workshop in Emerald at the QRRRWN conference should be pursued with the conference committee – this would be cut-down version of the workshop focussed on encouraging participants to reflect on their leadership aspirations, highlighting the available resources/pathways, and to ground truth our understanding of the barriers women experience.
- Discussed the format of the workshops
 - 9.30am for a 10am start – 1pm finish: 3 hours of working time with morning tea at the start and social/networking lunch from 1pm
 - Present the tree framework and encourage participants to consider where they currently are and where they might like to be / what leadership spaces they might like to step into
 - Up to three speakers (with an emphasis on telling a story or sharing insights into their leadership journey) – who would catalyse group discussion around key questions/themes
- Discussed potential speakers
 - DAF has found some funds that will enable Jess Fealy to attend the four workshops. This will help promote the Rural Women's Award and also give Jess an opportunity to speak about the role of social networks and social media to enhance connectedness amongst rural women.
 - Nadine unfortunately will be on leave from 7-20 October, but could speak about business planning, adaptive capacity and resilience
- Workshop promotion
 - QFF members
 - Mark Neville manages comms for many of the QFF member groups
 - Canegrowers: Neroli Rooke
 - Cotton Australia: comms mgr based in Sydney
 - DAF manages a Queensland Agriculture facebook page and the e-newsletter, FoodChain
 - AustSafe can cross promote to their members / clients.
 - Rabobank? Jane to ask Nerida
 - Run general press releases as well to get promotion through mainstream media
 - Align promotion of the workshops with International Rural Womens Day 15 October

Future opportunities

- Partners confirmed that the project is addressing a critical gap and is heading in the right direction. There is a definite a need for a program focused on supporting and skilling farm businesswomen to advance into more business and industry leadership roles. A Queensland-level program would help bridge the gap between the business level and the national-scale leadership programs. The project is an opportunity to build the evidence / business case for investment in such a program.
- There are a growing number of opportunities for support and skills development for businesswomen – the project should look to harness our networks; coordinate with other programs and activities; try to cross-pollinate with other projects as much as possible.

- For future work, how can we most effectively tap into digital technologies?
 - The leadership tree concept could be developed into a one hour webinar – could look at options to get a video or audio recording of this session at the regional workshops
 - Podcasts are increasingly popular. There could be opportunities to have a good interviewer record conversations with successful farm businesswomen for podcasts. This could be a way to hook Leigh Sales into the initiative?
- Other areas of interest / priority areas for skills development are in supply chain management, export market development and understanding the trade environment.

Wrap up

- Partners indicated their interest to stay closely involved throughout the project
- Stephanie and Jane have tossed around some ideas for launching the analysis report & recommendations at the end of the project – will discuss these with partners over email or a future phone link

Appendix 4: regional workshops summaries (each region)

Mareeba

4 October 2017

Industry participants (12)

- Horticulture – mango, avocado
- Horticulture – lady finger bananas, banana flour
- Horticulture – coffee
- Dairy
- Cane
- Mixed farming – vanilla, pinto pea
- Business (chamber of commerce)
- Agri –services
 - pest management
 - finance x 2
 - insurance x 2

Thoughts on identifying as a farmer

- Many women feel that the farmer is the one doing the actual farm work.
- It can be positive to own the title 'farm wife'. We just need to communicate what that distinctive role is.
- A lot of people don't believe a woman could be a farmer.
- Working to help redefine farming and raise its status as a worthwhile and valuable career. Promoting the roles of women in farming is an important part of that.
- Building a better understanding of neuroscience helps you to understand that many thoughts are just habitual. We need to change the label and the image of women in farming.
- If you are going to 'put it out there' / put yourself in the spotlight to promote what it is to be a farming woman, you need to be prepared to cop the flack. People will comment and criticize.

Leadership tree

- See attachment one and two
- Add to the business branch
 - Company/private boards
 - Commercialisation of new products/innovations
 - Sole operators
 - Allied industries / service businesses to agriculture
 - Finance / banking
 - Insurance
 - Superannuation
- Additional branch: Family
- Additional branch: Information / Communication
 - Social media
 - Traditional media

Additions to resource list

- Qualifications in Neuroscience of leadership
- Josie Thompson website

Key enablers

- Targeted training and skills development.
 - When you start out, you don't know what you don't know. Found it extremely empowering to do the ACID company director's course. Enabled her to recognize problems and take necessary actions to resolve them.
 - National Rural Women's Coalition e-leaders course is highly worthwhile, valuable
- Personal style / attitude
 - Rather than say "I can't", instead think, "How can I?"
- Making choices based on clarity of purpose/priorities
 - Setting clear goals helps you determine work/roles that you need to let go of / delegate to someone else
- Investing in yourself
 - Choosing where to spend your time and money to have greatest impact on working towards your goals
- Knowing where to find resources that help you
- Disaster assistance can be / has been used strategically by some growers to catalyse renewal and retraining
- (others from Jess and Krista's talks)

Barriers

- Confidence (not enough of it)
 - To back yourself
 - To make your voice heard
 - To build networks
 - To convince others that you have a good idea/s
 - The flip side is to have the benefit of sponsors / people who will actively promote/support you and your ideas
 - Imposter/fraud syndrome
- Women's ideas and voices are not always validated, especially in a male-dominated group
- Financial constraints
 - It can be very difficult to raise the capital necessary to achieve your business vision
 - Women running a solo farm business often face particular difficulties accessing finance (or funding)
- Maintaining your positivity and momentum
- Achieving enough connectivity and communication; reaching out
- Connecting to your customer base
- Wall building – as a strategy for dealing with negative messages from social media.
- Public perception / other people's perceptions
 - Of what women are capable of managing / achieving. (Rebecca) some people do not believe she is capable of running her business single-handedly and don't take her seriously until they see her operations.

- Achieving scientific validation of innovative ideas
 - A number of participants had products, innovations, or commercialization ideas that required scientific research/trials to verify/validate; this can be difficult to organize and is often very expensive
- Overcoming resistance from the mainstream / the establishment / the status quo
 - You need to fight to promote/progress/achieve acceptance of ideas/businesses/approaches that are not a product of the mainstream system
 - “the Gatton factor” – it doesn’t have legitimacy/credibility if it didn’t come out of Gatton (this applies to people and things)
- Until there is a critical mass of successful women in business and women in industry leadership, each individual woman must invest a huge amount of energy building their credibility and achieving acceptance amongst existing leaders/managers/gate keepers/ decision makers

Critical gaps / what do women want better access to

- There are not enough funds around to support women to get the skills they need to progress in business and leadership. It would be valuable for women to have access to subsidized business management/governance/leadership training/professional development – or, even better, access to scholarships/bursaries
- Upskilling / Skills development in critical/strategic areas
 - Women need to build their social media skills (to take full advantage of the opportunities it presents)
 - IT/digital technology
- Easier access to grants, finance, investment/investors
- Higher visibility
- Champions and better access to mentoring – assistance with finding a good match
- Pathway maps
 - “How to” guides to get from where we are now to where we want to be

Opportunities / Resources accessible in the FNQ region

- Chamber of Commerce / JCU project – workshops to scope the skills women need to advance in business and management; provision of mentoring
- Grant – to deliver a regional event during 2018 Women’s Week (Office of Women)

Ideas actions/projects

- Apply for a Women’s Week grant to organize a re-connect breakfast for women in agriculture
- Connect with / contribute to efforts to redefine farming women (reshape the image of farming women and build understanding of the roles they play in contemporary agriculture); this can be linked to broader efforts to re-shape the community’s perception of farming
 - Women in Farming Calendar
 - Krista keen to coordinate a grant application and make it happen.
 - Rebecca’s rainbow farming dress photo could be included (Miss January!)

Follow ups

- Jane/Steph to check with Express and Tablelands Advertiser for coverage
- Gail to send out information on free social media training session delivered by Jess
- Penny to send contact details for Linda Ray / Neuroscience of leadership information

- Jane to find
 - Notes/resources from Josie Thompson re neuroscience and resilience
 - Notes from Women & Leadership Australia esp identifying the 'sweet spot' where you interests, skills and talents intersect

Additional thoughts from Leanne Kruss

Key areas of need (for skills development, professional networks, leadership development)

- Export market access / market development / Export readiness / Export facilitation
 - Has to be designed and delivered by people with good knowledge and experience (including growers with strong export experience)
- Re-position/market agriculture and horticulture as a contemporary, exciting, innovative and technology-driven sector and promote the opportunities for business and employment it offers. Raise the status of working in the farming sector and support regional kids to pursue education/qualifications in agricultural studies/science.
 - Leanne and others actively driving this on the Tablelands. A key part of this strategy is to target the high school system: ensuring students can access agriculture subjects, maintaining excellence awards in agriculture studies, promoting agriculture at careers events, demonstrating the opportunities for careers in agriculture or agriculture service industries and the pathways towards them. Achieving some success: 800 students on the Tablelands are doing ag studies at school.
 - Another essential part of the strategy is to address the "Gatton Factor". Currently, the only option for students who want to attain a tertiary qualification in agriculture is to move to Gatton, with many young people not returning to the region. Working with CQU (Cairns campus) to make tertiary qualifications in agriculture available within the region (negotiating for 3 degree courses).
 - Another element is to ensure students have access to agriculture-focused traineeships and school-based apprenticeships
 - Ongoing campaign needed to change the way the wider community values food and values the people who grow it. An indicator of how well we are doing in this is whether the kids of farmers are respected by their school mates.

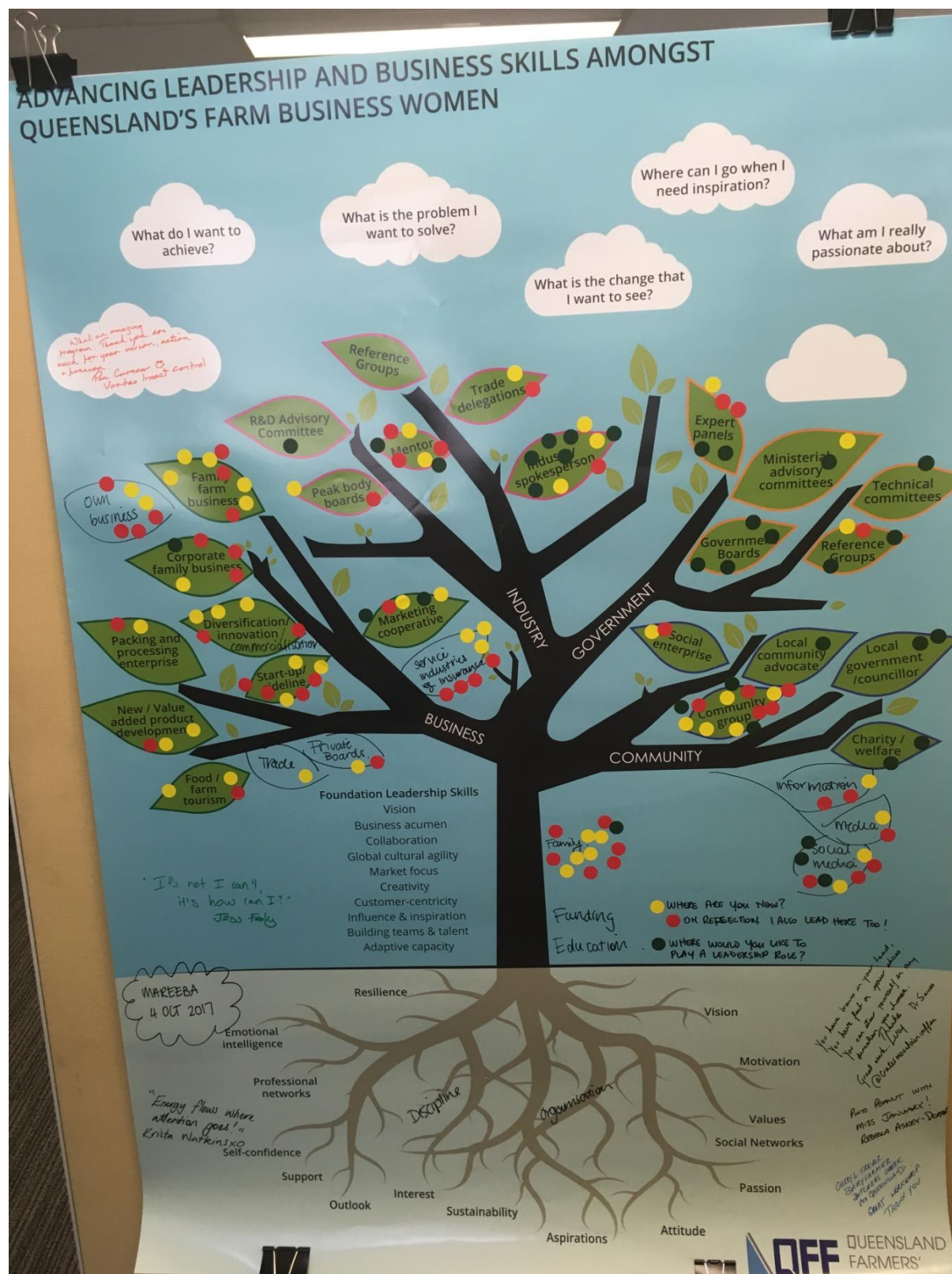
Key enablers

- Strong and active regional industry associations
- Regional facilitators who can bring critical/targeted information to very localized meetings to make it as easy as possible for growers to engage/stay informed; who can bring a highly personalized approach/connect with people at a personal level; who don't rely on sending emails
- Region-specific databases of regional resources/information that facilitate networking and sharing amongst regional communities. This can include a regional skills audit to make it easier to find the right person for a job e.g. growers who are prepared to share their story at a public forum
- Access to tertiary qualifications in ag and related fields available within regions
- Collaborators and networkers are often the best leaders at a regional scale.

Attachment one: Leadership tree results (Mareeba)

Branch names	Leaves	Current	Current (2)	Future
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Boards Ministerial Advisory Committees Reference Groups Technical committees Expert panels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 1 1 0 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 1 0 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 1 2 1 2
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peak body boards R&D Advisory Committee Reference Groups Trade delegations Industry spokesperson Mentor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 0 0 1 3 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 0 0 1 1 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 1 0 0 6 2
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family farm business Corporate family farm business Packing and processing enterprise Diversification / innovation / commercialisation New / Value added product development Marketing cooperative Food / farm tourism Start-up / sideline Own business Trade Private boards Agri-service industries eg insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 1 1 3 2 2 2 3 2 1 1 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 3 1 2 1 1 4 4 0 1 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 1 0 0 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community advocate Local government / councillor Community group Charity / welfare Social enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 5 0 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 5 0 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 1 3 2 0
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing Media Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 1 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 1 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 3
Family		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1

Attachment two: Final leadership tree poster (Other notes on the tree trunk: Funding, Education)



Toowoomba Workshop notes
17 October 2017

Industry participants (24)

- Dairy (1)
- Nursery (1)
- Cotton (2)
- Cotton/Grains (1)
- Grazing/cropping (1)
- Grazing / beef (7)
- Feedlot(1)
- Agri –services
 - Drones x 2
 - Finance x 4
 - Business consultants x 2
- Regional economic development (1)
- Government (2)

Thoughts on identifying as a farmer

- Women are conscious of the feelings of their men; aware that men feel a very strong identity as a farmer/grazier and that this is a masculine identity.
- Many believed that this is a generational issue: that traditionally, women did not identify as farmers, but the current generation is adopting the identity/title of farmer, and expect that their daughters will think nothing of calling themselves a farmer.
- Women who marry into a farming family/farming business sometimes do not feel entitled to identify as a farmer.
 - One participant commented that she came from a financial management background and married into a fourth generation dairy farm: did not feel she had the right to claim to be a farmer, though very comfortably took on the role of managing the business side of the farm. Yet still would identify as “a mum”. More recently there was a business restructure that formally recognized her place in the farm business – this has helped her to now identify as a farmer.
- Women commonly experience issues around the succession process: women are frequently not included in wills/estate plans. Many in this generation are dealing with the implications / fall out from poorly managed succession from the generation before.
- Strong theme around generational attitudes and the culture generally.
 - Noted that if a woman bids at a cattle sale, the auctioneer will look to the man standing beside her to verify the legitimacy of the bid.
- The image of the primary producer is a masculine image and in many ways, rural people want to protect that male image; the masculine image of the primary producer is romanticized and wrapped up in our image of ‘the land’. In this picture, men are primary and the women are in support roles. Women are identified as those who have babies and raise children.
 - Noted that the media buys into this identity with television shows such as Farmer Wants a Wife.

- Counter point was also made: the further west you go, where farming families are more isolated, both of the couple will identify as 'producers'; both feel completely invested in the work that needs to be done to survive.
- Another participant also pointed out the implicit hierarchy of industries in rural Australia: cattle are sexy, chickens are not.
- Group did acknowledge that there is a positive shift occurring that recognizes the vital roles women play and that there is value in encouraging/supporting a shift in perception of what a farmer is.
 - And women are increasingly recognising the importance of having their name on the cheque book.
 - Women also noted that in some rural families, there can be a real problem of the older men keeping an overly tight grip on the leadership/control/power in the family. Families in grazing sector (and grazing business development) can be frustrated by a patriarch who refuses to have any discussion about succession planning.

Leadership tree

- See attachment one and two
- Add to the business branch
 - Corporate / commercial farming
 - Farm administration /finance
 - Off-farm work / activities
- Add to the government branch
 - Farming services
- Add to the community branch
 - Social networks
 - Schools / Kindy
- Additional branch: Communication
 - Social media
 - Spokesperson
 - Advocate

Additions to resource list

- South Burnett and Central West leadership programs and alumni

Key enablers

- Targeted training and skills development.
- Personal style / attitude
 - If someone tells me I can't do something, I'll make sure I do it.
 - Develop a capacity to relate to people; hear their story; recognize that most people are much more than what you see on the surface
 - Develop a capacity for self-reflection. Learn to be able to hear and accept negative feedback or criticism. When you are reacting to something, it usually means there is something there you need to hear and address.
 - Ability to recognize that obstacles will either teach you a lesson or re-direct to a different or better opportunity; accepting that sometimes you have to go backwards to go forwards.
- Backing yourself / becoming more comfortable in promoting yourself, your abilities, what you can offer
 - If you don't sell yourself, who else will?

- Investing in yourself / tap into opportunities for personal and professional development
 - Choosing where to spend your time and money to have greatest impact on working towards your goals
- Having a sponsor and/or support network
 - Everyone needs at least one person who believes in you and will advocate for you; someone you can turn to when you have doubts who can remind you what your strengths are
- Making choices based on clarity of purpose/priorities and/or values

Barriers

- Negative internal dialogue / mantra / self-talk
 - What we say to ourselves inside our mind has a huge influence on what we are capable of achieving
- Self doubt
- Undervaluing yourself, including financially
- Unconscious bias
- Other people's perceptions
- Lack of support, mentors, sponsors
- Unwillingness of women to promote themselves
- Limited opportunities for training/development
- Negative workplace relationships – this is particularly tricky in a family business context
- Cultural barriers – particularly an issue in international companies that have a more patriarchal culture
- Insufficient sharing of domestic roles and tasks
 - Leads to mental fatigue that comes from the multiple roles women play / the level of detail we have to retain in our heads to ensure things run smoothly on all fronts
- Being type-cast as “the problem solver”
 - Leads to women becoming embroiled in everything. It is useful to learn how to encourage family/team members to solve their own issues
- Life stage: some leadership roles are not feasible for women with significant family responsibilities/obligations
- Choices
 - There is sometimes a need for women to make more active choices about where they invest their time and energy
- Geographic barriers: logistics of participating in leadership roles when there are large distances to travel
- Technological barriers: the limitations, cost, accessibility, reliability of internet and telecommunications
- (from group discussion notes)
 - Travel / distances
 - Self development / time mentality

Critical gaps

- Women want to build their social media skills

Signs of a good leader

- In a business or organisational context, the place will keep running well if you step away from it.

Group discussion – Useful resources currently used

- Keeping informed through radio, TV, local papers, magazines, other papers
- Current female leaders and long-term workers (role models?)
- Online communities/social media
 - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn
 - Resourcing Women in the North
 - Rural Business Collective
 - QRRRW
- Work communities/networks
- Local communities
- WoW
- DAF
- Industry / research organisations eg MLA, AHRI
- Alpha MPM project (check with Brigid)
- HR services such as Tweak HR (Toowoomba-Warwick based)
- Industry women's networks eg Women in Dairy; Women in Agriculture
- QRRRW WiRE program
- Having a goal buddy
- Reading / drawing in literature
- Own business plan
- Keep a notebook of quotes to go to for positive reinforcement
- South Burnett community leadership program
- Social media e-leaders course
- Training programs/sessions eg working in teams; understanding personality types
- Other women
- CCIQ
- www.ruralresourcesonline.com.au

Group discussion –Resources/support we'd like to have

- How to find out events/resources if not on social media
- Resource adverts to address barriers
- Social media conferences
- Resource sharing
- Female industry leaders / long time engagement
- Online interactive conference (video *and* text)
- Goal setting (and support for)
- Better access to mentors (both at the level I currently operate, and the level I want to get to)
- Knowledge / understanding of what different women's groups do/are
- Databases
- Low cost
- Push / commitment /accountability
- Dairy industry – needs something for women
- Platform for exposure
- Visible lost / know about them
- Information sharing

- Awareness of support services
 - Mentor / sponsor
 - Goal buddy
 - Supportive husbands, family, friends
-
- Real life mentor
 - Sponsor
 - Forums
 - Webinars
 - Field days
 - Community topic discussions (industry specific)
-
- Sponsors, mentors
 - A 'good ideas' department where you can submit ideas and get feedback/response
 - How to cut red tape and green tape

Opportunities / Resources accessible in the Darling Downs/wider region

- BIEDO events
- Community Foundation: self-funded regional leadership development program coordinated by Pam McAllister

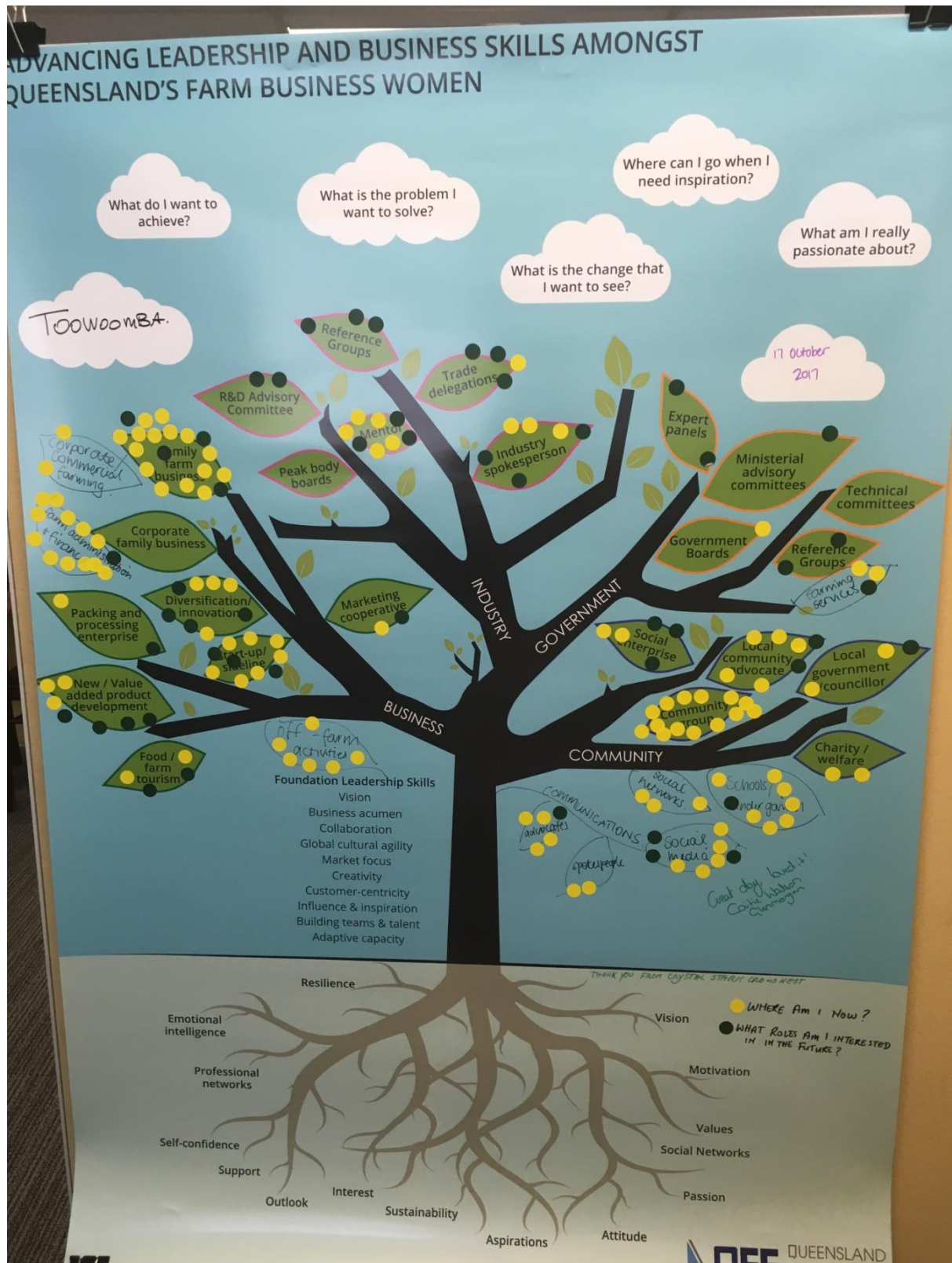
Follow ups

- Jane to add Rural Resources Online to resource list
- Jane to liaise with Kristy from BIEDO about opportunities to collaborate on projects
- Jane and Stephanie Denman to keep in touch about opportunities to collaborate, and in particular to link with regional leadership development programs being coordinated through Pam McAllister and her team.

Attachment one: leadership tree results (Toowoomba)

Branch names	Leaves	Current	Future
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Boards • Ministerial Advisory Committees • Reference Groups • Technical committees • Expert panels • Farming services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 0 • 0 • 0 • 0 • 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 • 1 • 2 • 0 • 2 • 1
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peak body boards • R&D Advisory Committee • Reference Groups • Trade delegations • Industry spokesperson • Mentor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 • 0 • 0 • 1 • 3 • 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 • 2 • 3 • 3 • 3 • 3
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family farm business • Corporate family farm business • Packing and processing enterprise • Diversification / innovation • New / Value added product development • Marketing cooperative • Food / farm tourism • Start-up / sideline • Corporate / commercial farming • Farm administration /finance • Off-farm work / activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 • 0 • 1 • 4 • 3 • 1 • 2 • 7 • 2 • 12 • 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 • 0 • 1 • 4 • 4 • 1 • 2 • 3 • 0 • 1 • 0
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community advocate • Local government / councillor • Community group • Charity / welfare • Social enterprise • Social networks • Schools / Kindy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 • 2 • 14 • 2 • 2 • 3 • 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 • 1 • 0 • 0 • 2 • 0 • 1
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Spokesperson • Advocates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 • 2 • 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 • 0 • 1

Attachment two: Final leadership tree poster



Industry participants (14)

- Chicken meat
- Strawberries
- Macadamias
- Tropical fruits (lychee, dragon fruit, custard apple)
- Spices
- Nursery / flowering orchids
- Cattle (and food writer/broadcaster)
- Agri –services
 - Reproductive services (cattle)
 - Agricultural consultant
 - Superannuation
 - Community
 - Leadership program delivery

Thoughts on identifying as a farmer

- It doesn't matter what you call yourself, so long as you value what you do and don't diminish your role.
- Within industry circles, everyone understands what roles women play and these roles are generally valued. However, you do experience problems as a woman when you go to the pump shop for parts....
- It depends on the audience. Have experienced discrimination eg from truck drivers who assume a woman can't handle the task of loading cattle and suggest she better get her husband.
- General agreement that the men/husbands are the primary producer. Women differentiate between the physical/manual work of farming and the financial/administrative, organizing and business side. Also noted that while the physical farming tasks are generally men's roles, most women are capable of doing those tasks if/when required. So women maybe step back too readily from the producer identity – this is probably linked to a sense of wanting to protect the male ego.
 - Counter point made by one participant (Dianne) that she is comfortable and proud to call herself a farmer.
- A common problem, though, is that in most farms/properties, the women work as hard as the men, but then come inside and turn around to do all the cooking and other home-based jobs while the men relax. Women need to be more mindful of this because it actually undermines what we do and gives men permission to expect women to keep providing all those 'services' and to continue to perceive women as playing a secondary or support role and undervalue the core work they are doing alongside men.
- Agreed that titles and labels do help women to define their roles, create an identity, and build pride in their place in the business/industry. Whatever title you chose to use should be linked to your knowledge base and skills.
- The titles we choose are also very contextual – you will always give the greatest status to the person in the group/room with the most experience or most significant role in production. But happily adopt the title when that person leaves the room!
- One participant commented that when they decided to pursue diversification and value adding, she completed some training courses – which she found to be really empowering.

- General agreement that there is a need to change the image/perception of farming as a respectable occupation. The extent of change in the farming sector was noted, particularly that it used to be highly individualized whereas now industries are far more organized and there are more meetings and opportunities for interaction.

Leadership tree

- See attachment one and two
- Add to the industry (or government) branch
 - Joint industry-government working group to progress export readiness and streamlined trade
- Add to the community branch
 - Informal leadership roles: self, family, community
- Additional branch: International business and trade
 - Trade processes & procedural knowledge
 - Export readiness, including legal, economic, financial, cultural understanding, technical requirements (such as testing etc)
 - Consultancy

Jodie Redcliffe's perspectives

- Farm succession was likely to be complex with four siblings, so chose to purchase the chicken property from Wayne's parents
- Always focused on the farm as a business. Kids were raised not to expect to be given the farm.
- Farming is just as much – if not more – about the office work.
- Moved into a leadership role with an industry association because husband too busy and less skilled in email/writing.
 - Actually don't particularly enjoy industry work
 - Have to fake it til you make it
 - Often, Jodie was the only woman in the room and at first didn't pay any attention to this, but over time it did become more obvious
- Doing Nuffield and a women's leadership course helped define a few issues
 - Built greater self confidence
 - Recognition that women do communicate quite differently and that in some contexts you need to swap to a more masculine style
 - Men tend to say "I" more
 - Women tend to say "we"; are more collaborative; are more likely to preface a statement with "just". Men never say, "just"
 - Have learned to be more mindful of the way I speak / catch myself / stop making excuses or apologizing for perhaps not having a 100% knowledge of a topic
 - All of us display 'unconscious bias'
- Women need to have a strong mental resilience: women tend to keep the family together when times are tough, when men are not coping or are feeling highly stressed/worried.
- Found that the farm works best when we have/do our own roles in our own areas of skill.
- 30 years of farming does take its toll ... you must do things to look after yourself, to achieve balance, to have some fun. Get up on the balcony and off the dance floor – it's essential to look at things from a wider perspective as often as you can.
- Many women 'fall into farming' through marriage and it can take time for them to find their place in the farming enterprise and feel confident in their skills, roles.

Key enablers

- Personal and professional development opportunities (eg Nuffield Scholarships)
 - The Nuffield journey has a positive influence on women's identity as a farmer
 - Nuffield offers a window into global agriculture
 - Specialised "women in leadership" courses
- Having a cheerleader! [sponsor] – especially when that person is your partner/close family. Who is *your* number one fan?
- Having a supportive partner, particularly one who is willing to equally share the load of home and family work
- Taking opportunities to "get on the balcony" and find a broader perspective on problems/challenges
- Taking opportunities to rest/have some fun – because farming life is tough going.

Barriers/constraints

- Poorly managed succession processes can leave rural families and businesses in limbo, or constrain their options for investment/innovation which in turn could limit opportunities for otherwise high-potential leaders to step beyond the farm sphere
- Life stage: Raising kids is the most important role we play as women so other opportunities have to be fitted around this as a primary responsibility [unless your partner agrees to take on the primary parenting role]. Women with leadership potential have the best opportunities for participation prior to having kids, in the very early years or once the kids are grown-up.
- Having our voices in agriculture heard and dealing with all the negative messages about/poor public perception of agriculture and farming
- Women's tendency to take everything on, or to try to manage every aspect of home and business life, and to need to have things done their way or to their standard ... leads to over-commitment and mental fatigue. We need to own the fact that often we create our own problems when we behave like this.
- Having too many balls in the air; having too many diverse responsibilities and commitments; not being able to step away from essential tasks
- A need to maintain the image that you have everything under control / an inability to ask for help
- Not feeling able to step away from the business and trust that the team can continue to run it without your input/guidance/management
- Women's tendency to apologise for not being 100% across the issues or to undersell their knowledge/perspective/contribution
- Lack of confidence
- Poor access to opportunities for development activities OR a lack of knowledge of available opportunities
- (sometimes) a lack of support from other women
 - Especially a problem if the women closest to you/own family are not positive or supportive
 - But this can also relate to a lack of support from other women involved in the discussion/decision forum
- Women's unwillingness to self promote
- Not having a sponsor or champion
- Gender perceptions / stereotypes
- Capacity to keep up with change – especially developments in technology
- Generational issues: changes in language/systems

Additions to resource list

Community leadership program model (South Burnett) - Pam McAllister

- Building Rural Leaders (BRL) was a valuable program. When the Qld Government stopped funding the program, it left a significant gap in leadership training opportunities
- Noticed that many rural businesses and regions were being swept along in a cycle of drought-flood-drought etc. Yet in spite of this, there were still so many remarkable and innovative agricultural business enterprises out there.
- Decided to harness some of the disaster recovery funds to try to build some positive/lasting infrastructure that could support regional leadership / capacity building / resilience.
- Drew together a small group of BRL alumni members to drive the establishment of a different kind of leadership program that could be delivered annually; build up cohorts of trained local leaders each year; and based on asking local businesses to support/sponsor someone in the local community to attend the program each year so that money was not a barrier to participation
- The program provides 2 modules, delivered as 2 x 3-day sessions. There is also a half yearly get together for alumni members which usually has 25-30 people attend
- The Inland Burnett program is now in its fifth year and has more than 100 graduates. This year, some FRRR funds are supporting four North Burnett community members to participate.
- The Central West program is in its second year

Resources used to date

- University
- Professional development
- Industry boards
- Membership of industry associations
- Women's networking events
- Workshops

- Online info
- Industry groups and networks
- Conversations
- Online free leadership program mentioned by Jodie
- Great stories from many women – need sharing

What do we want/need?

- Awareness, education
- Availability
- Resources / list of networks A database
- Webinars
- Fundamentals of ag policy: how, why, decisions
- Have a say!
- Training in how to access markets

- Networking
 - Importance

- Multi-farming disciplines
 - Directory
- Language
- Social media training (youtube?)
- Courses, workshops
- Grant access

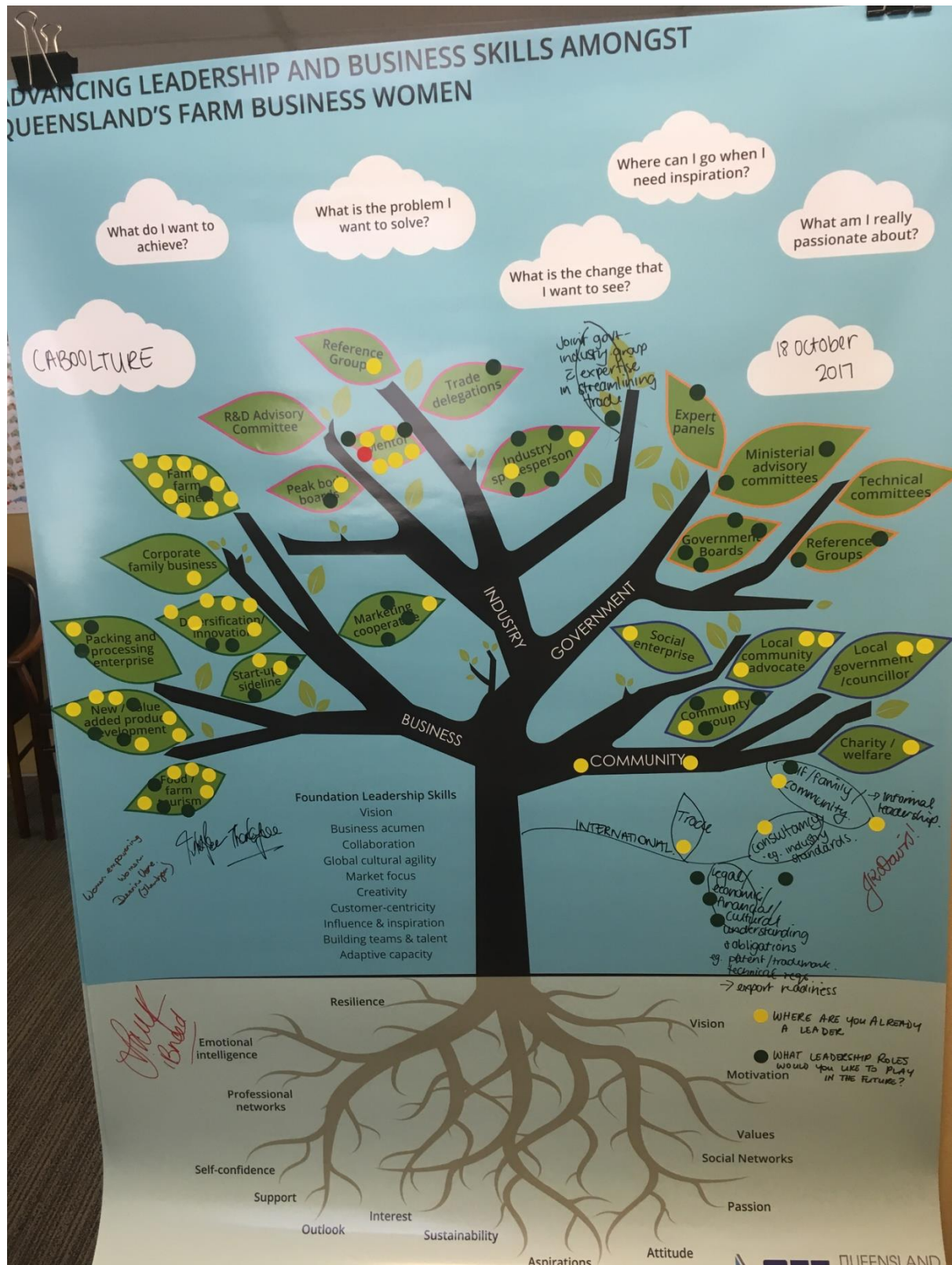
- Filters for the large amount of resources available
- Specific/targeted industry women's groups
- Facilitate more conversations
- Lessons to ask for money [successful grant writing; strategies for applying for finance]
- Promotion of the value of women and other participants in farming families
- Overarching body to bring all women-focused groups as a single voice
- Grow skills for leadership and community / industry development. No Queensland programs for regions

- Training / skills development in facebook / social media to help businesses promote and sell their product; assistance in creating a blog; help to promote the business by using # in posts through social media

Attachment one: leadership tree results - Caboolture

Branch names	Leaves	Current	Current (2)	Future
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Boards Ministerial Advisory Committees Reference Groups Technical committees Expert panels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 2 2 0 1
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peak body boards R&D Advisory Committee Reference Groups Trade delegations Industry spokesperson Mentor Joint industry-government working group to progress export readiness and streamlined trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 0 1 0 2 5 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 0 0 1 4 2 1
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family farm business Corporate family farm business Packing and processing enterprise Diversification / innovation New / Value added product development Marketing cooperative Food / farm tourism Start-up / sideline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 1 1 6 6 1 5 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 0 2 2 3 3 3 2
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community advocate Local government / councillor Community group Charity / welfare Social enterprise Informal: self, family, community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 2 2 1 1 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 3 1 0 1
Global Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade Consultancy Export readiness including legal, economic, financial, cultural understanding, technical requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 1 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 4

Attachment two: Final leadership tree poster – Caboolture



Bundaberg
25 October 2017

Industry participants (22)

- Cane (3)
- Horticulture (5)
 - flowers, avocados, macadamias, strawberries, passionfruit
- Cane/horticulture (4)
- Beef (5)
- Service/support
 - Industry association (2)
 - Agribusiness services (1)
 - Financial counselling (2)



Thoughts on identifying as a farmer

- I have no problem saying “I’m a flower farmer”, so I’ve never considered this as an issue. Is that because females are more prevalent in flower farming? Although, other farmers scoff that flower farming is not real farming [the agricultural hierarchy again – see Toowoomba]
- Newer/younger farmers are sometimes challenged by older generations as not really being legitimate farmers yet
- Many women agreed with one participant’s comment, “I never know what to write when I have to fill in a form stating my ‘occupation’. Should I say, Farmer? I am many things and my roles vary from

day to day: sometimes I'm doing the house work, sometimes I'm doing the office work, sometimes I'm in the packing shed"

- Even blokes say "I'm just a farmer" so there are still many people in the industry who undervalue their profession.
- Industry is changing and more people are realizing that farming is a multi-faceted/multi-talented role
- Initial reaction from friends/family to her decision to get into farming with her husband was horrified. Why did she go there? However, I made a conscious choice when I married to 'become a farmer' and I've always been very comfortable with it. It doesn't matter what you do from day to day and week to week, in the bigger picture, you are a farmer.
- Issues around identifying as a farmer links back to the social status of farming. In a regional area, kids who aren't academic at school are told to consider farming; agriculture is thought of as a good option for the kids who aren't particularly bright. Amongst kids, it is not cool to be from a farming family / to be part of the farming industry.
- Outraged by a teacher's comment to her son, "oh well, if you are happy enough to just plod along and do farming ..."
- I have been involved in farming the whole time I've lived in Australia. I do lots of things, but I feel most proud of being a farmer. And I feel proud of Bundaberg. Always amazed by the reaction of city people: oh, you poor thing! Stuck on a *farm*. People said to my father, how can you let her just go back on the farm? Surely there is something better you can do?
- People with agricultural roots will often find their way into finance, or other sectors that are aligned to farming industries
- It's important that as farmers we shake off the romanticized image we have created for ourselves over generations that the work is tough and the life is one of poverty. We need to change that. We need to embrace a different attitude: it's ok to make money! As farmers, we should expect to do well. We should expect to have great holidays!
- Perceptions are slowly changing about agriculture and farming.
- Use facebook and social media to drive a change in perception
- A continuing problem is the disconnect between food and where it comes from (and how/who it comes from)
- (very different perspective) I am not the farmer. I am married to a farmer. I have my own job. I don't want to be consumed by farming.
- From a beef industry perspective, we have to watch out for our own culture of apathy or – worse – the whinging farmer. If we don't portray a positive image or if we talk our industry down, what do we expect other people to think? The media will always want to focus on negatives so it's quite difficult to get good news stories out there. But – we have to stop whinging, get on with business and step up.

Leadership tree

- See attachments one and two
- Add to industry branch
 - Industry group membership
- Add to business branch
 - Supply chain knowledge
- Additional branch: **Professional development / Education / Training**. Context: women recognize the value in engaging in training and education but can find it difficult to identify or access training that properly meets their needs. Women's training/professional development/reskilling needs are

distinctive and shaped by factors such as marrying into family farm businesses when they have started out with training and experience in one field and now need to develop skills in the agriculture field; the recognition of the need to survive in business through adaptability which often means transitioning from one industry to another; the recognition of the need to harness emerging technologies and innovations to keep the business at the cutting edge; the need for professional renewal; the recognition of the importance of understanding and increasing their influence of the wider supply chain. It was also noted that it is challenging to find appropriate training courses for young people. Suggested leaves for this branch:

- New skills development
- Re-skilling (to support business transitioning or diversification)
- Value-adding to existing skills through continuous professional development
- Skills / knowledge of technology and innovation
- Youth-focused training / skills development

Tina's perspectives

- Have farmed in Bundaberg for 12 years, but also travelled and farmed across the world (New Zealand, Uruguay, Indonesia)
- Have done many things in life, but it has not been a planned journey – more driven by a sense of adventure.
- Steph's leadership slide: describes mothers! If you can do those things with your kids, you can translate those skills to anywhere & anything!
- Currently, running a diverse farming business (cane, strawberries, passionfruits, farm tours/pick your own, value adding) as well as a second business in travel. In recent years, have taken on the role of chair of Passionfruit Australia
- Did not directly choose to go on a leadership journey – it has been an ad hoc process and done between other parts of life and raising 4 kids
- Running a business, running a family – both of these require leadership
- Did the women's leadership course with Growcom in 2011; really enjoyed watching people from that course progress, and grow in profile and influence
- As the kids get older, you start thinking of wider things, noticing things that need to be done (it's a lot like tuckshop: someone needs to do it)
- If you are considering / find yourself in a leadership role, its nice to have the chance to team up with another talented person – especially someone who is good at the things that you are not strong in.
- In the passionfruit role, I'm not intimidated by the men and I don't have a barrow to push. I'm just getting a job done.
- Invited to participate on the steering committee to transition Horticulture Australia to Hort Innovation Australia. This was an interesting experience and made me consider a role on a board. Did some board training and joined networks (eg Women on Boards) ... but then had a rethink. Is that really where I want to put my spare time and energy, reading board papers?
- Determined that it is better to follow your passions and your talents. My talents are connecting with people and my passion is travel. So in recent years, I have looked for a way to combine them into a new business venture. Have established a travel company to take rural women on overseas tours with a focus on agriculture.
- Thoughts on challenges / barriers women experience
 - Finding the time to do the things you want to do
 - Securing the finance / finding the money to pursue your ideas

- Money is a particular challenge, because in agriculture, any profit you make has to be channeled back into the business
- Can you back your gut feeling
- Status – men often don't listen or often ignore women's ideas
- Under-recognition of the value of agriculture
- Health
 - Illness can throw everything into a spin
- Ability to handle stress and competing demands
- Women usually take the primary responsibility to do the caring roles (for kids and for aging parents)

Key enablers

- Knowing what your talents and passions are and following them
- Open-mindedness and a positive attitude
- Having a strong sense of adventure and/or being open to seizing opportunities
- Translating the skills you hone as a mother to other spaces
- Taking opportunities to do training, skills development – especially in leadership capabilities
- Teaming up with a good partner to share leadership roles and tasks
- Staying task focused rather than getting tangled up in politics or other people's views
- Having clarity of purpose
- Getting involved in networks that provide opportunities for collaboration, support, skills development, sharing ideas

Barriers

- Finding enough time
 - However, this is often counter-balanced by the benefits to business gained from participation in an industry organisations / wider leadership role
 - Time commitment to working off farm (financial security) must be balanced with passion and future goals
- Stage of life/Responsibilities – caring for children/parents etc
- Health
- Finance
- Confidence
- Business stage – start-up v established businesses
- Getting stuck in trying to do everything yourself – finding and involving the right people
- Lack of security
- Support - partner; family; friends; industry
- Knowledge
- Lack of understanding and respect for the work of women on farms
- Lack of identity / role definition
- Lack of a clear voice; respect for opinion
- Clear communication between a diverse group of partners
 - Disagreement regarding changes to business practice/model are a barrier to progress
- Adaptability
- Lack of structure in family businesses including narrowly defined roles
- Understanding/acknowledging different styles of leadership

- Age – difficulty in acceptance of skills of younger generation (can work both ways – children may have difficulty accepting ideas of older generation); physical challenges of aging

Critical gaps / what do women want better access to

- Social media skills
- Access to resources list
- Mentoring for business growth/sustainability
- Guidance on including an investor in the business
- Business practicalities e.g. workplace health & safety
- Gap in grants – existing programs target startups and well-established/larger businesses but there isn't much available to assist businesses in between
- Help in navigating eligibility criteria for grants
- Non-traditional finance options
- How to write a business plan – useful for finance; grant applications (*see Growcom Innovation Coach – may require additional explanation to explain program)
- Definition of business structure
- Negotiation skills (communication and problem solving within business)
- Business coaching as an option for business review/improvement – very important to select the right person - look for recommendations
- Financial assistance to access business coaching
- Sponsorship for formal training; co-contributions as a way to ensure commitment from participants e.g. AICD

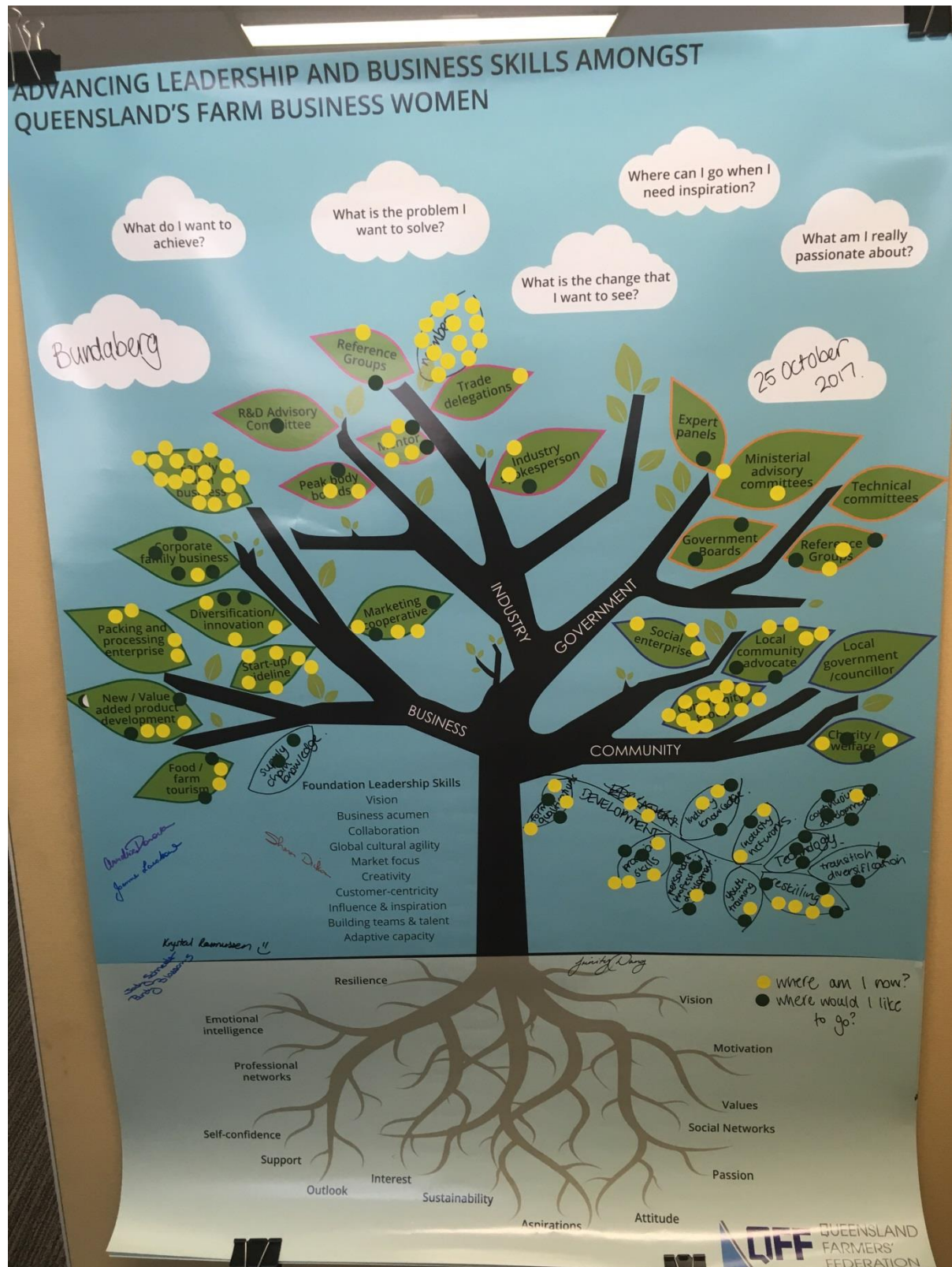
Additions to resource list / Follow ups / Grower profile options

- Jane to follow up with Trish Scott
- Jane to provide information on the innovation coach service

Attachment one: Leadership tree results – Bundaberg

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Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Boards Ministerial Advisory Committees Reference Groups Technical committees Expert panels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 1 2 0 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 0 2 0 1
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peak body boards R&D Advisory Committee Reference Groups Trade delegations Industry spokesperson Mentor Industry association member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 0 1 1 2 4 13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 1 1 0 1 2 0
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family farm business Corporate family farm business Packing and processing enterprise Diversification / innovation New / Value added product development Marketing cooperative Food / farm tourism Start-up / sideline Supply chain knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 1 4 3 3 3 2 6 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 4 0 2 3 2 2 0 2
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community advocate Local government / councillor Community group Charity / welfare Social enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 0 13 2 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 0 0 2 0
Education and professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry knowledge Industry networks Continuous development/life-long learning Technology Transition/diversification Farm qualifications Practical skills Personal/professional development Youth training Re-skilling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 2 1 0 0 3 4 1 1 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 1 4 3 2 2 2 4 1 3

Attachment two: Final leadership tree poster



Appendix 5: online survey

See separate pdf file