

RiST

RURAL INDUSTRIES SKILL TRAINING



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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Chairman's Report

I commence my report by extending my gratitude to Barbara Young for her pivotal role as Acting Chair following the unfortunate passing of Chairman Jeremy Upton. The year 2023 presented several hurdles, notably the persistently bleak forecast for commodity prices in the lamb and beef sectors for a substantial part of the year. This inevitably impacted the implementation of certain national programs within the sheep and beef industry.

Despite the fluctuations in commodity prices and seasonal variations, I take pride in announcing that RIST maintained its stature as one of the foremost non-public providers of agricultural training in Australia. Throughout 2023, we delivered in excess of 275,000 hours of training to 482 students nationwide. Since 2006, we have seen more than 2950 graduates from our vocational education programs, who have significantly contributed to various careers within the agricultural sector. The demand for our graduates from employers has been unprecedented and continues to rise.

The ongoing success of the Lifetime Ewe Management program underscores its status as the most successful sheep extension program ever delivered in Australia. Coupled with our vocational and pre-accredited programs, alongside other national and State-based short courses, RIST stands out, with our students highly sought after by industry.

Our robust partnerships with the school network across Victoria's southwest region, as well as the Victorian and Commonwealth Government, Agriculture Victoria, AWI, MLA and ACFE have been pivotal in ensuring RIST's continued success. These partnerships have facilitated comprehensive education pathways for our students, spanning from pre-accredited education and agriculture traineeships to higher education. This distinct offering, complemented by our national non-accredited fee-for-service short course programs, positions RIST as a premier agricultural college in Australia.

I extend my appreciation to my fellow Board members for their steadfast support and wise counsel throughout 2023. Bruce Keeley's departure from the Board in April saw Fiona Best and Joff Maclead joining our ranks. I express gratitude to Bruce for his longstanding contribution to RIST and welcome Fiona and Joff. Furthermore, I thank our committed staff and CEO Bill Hamill for their competence and resilience in navigating the challenges of the past year.

Lastly, I wish to convey my gratitude to the entire RIST community, including our students, parents, employers, schools, and trainers, for their unwavering enthusiasm and support during the turbulent times of the past year. Together, we have surmounted challenges and achieved significant milestones, and I look forward with anticipation to the opportunities that await us in the years ahead.

Tony Fleetwood
Chairman



CEO's Report

As we commemorate RIST's three decades of service, I am delighted to present the CEO Report for 2023, spotlighting our accomplishments and the distinct educational model that distinguishes RIST within Australia's educational landscape.

Throughout our history, RIST has strived to offer optimal educational opportunities for our students, drawing inspiration from reputable global education models. Our approach ensures seamless transitions from schooling to vocational training and higher education, guaranteeing a holistic learning experience tailored to diverse learning styles, particularly benefiting practical learners often overlooked by conventional education methods.

Innovating beyond traditional bounds, RIST has made its mark by nationally delivering non-accredited short courses, filling industry skill gaps with programs like Lifetime Ewe Management, Heifers for Profit and Weaners for Profit. These initiatives have solidified RIST as a premier provider of agricultural education, addressing industry demands across Australia.

As a Learn Local education provider, we cater to a broad spectrum of learners and specialized training in shearing and wool handling to meet the soaring industry demand. These efforts have contributed significantly to RIST's enduring success.

In tandem with the swift evolution of Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Artificial Intelligence, RIST remains at education's cutting edge, incorporating these innovations into our curriculum to equip students for the future workforce.

In 2023, the organisation be successful in being awarded two Victorian Government grants from the Agriculture TAFVE and Training Fund and the Regional Specialist Training Fund. Funding from these programs will enable RIST to modernise the campus facilities, upgrade equipment and develop new state of the art digital technology platforms and experiences that will position the organisation to meet

the challenges of the next decade. -an affirmation of RIST's commitment to driving innovation in agricultural education.

I also acknowledge and thank the RIST Board for their expert leadership and guidance and fostering an environment of innovation. We have a special team at RIST and I offer a special thank you to our staff and trainers for their unwavering dedication to our students' success.

We are indebted to the Victorian and Federal Governments, AWI, MLA, the Australian Wool Education Trust, and all stakeholders for their continued support, enabling us to deliver top-tier education and training.

In closing, I express my sincere appreciation to our students, employers, parents, and partner schools for working with and entrusting RIST with their educational journey. Together, we forge ahead, empowered by a shared commitment to excellence in education.

Bill Hamill
CEO



Director Profiles



Tony Fleetwood

Chairman May 2023 -

Tony Fleetwood is a past President of the Grassland Society and has been involved in a number of rural industry associations. He owns and operates a prime lamb operation in Western Victoria and is a strong advocate for training and education in agriculture. Tony was Chairman of the Board from July 2009 to July 2017. He was re-elected Chairman in May 2023.



Joff Macleod

Deputy Chairman

Joff joined the Board of RIST in 2023. He is a Director of Terra Australis Advisory where he is responsible for advising groups of large private clients in all aspects of business. Prior to establishing Terra Australis Advisory, Joff was a partner in the Private Client division of PwC in Melbourne.

Joff sits on the board of various large family groups and private enterprises in the agriculture and financial services sectors. His keen interest in the agricultural sector extends to operating a small cattle farm at Yea in Victoria.

A graduate of The University of Melbourne, Joff has a Bachelor of Commerce and a Masters of Taxation and has in excess of 35 years in the Chartered Accounting profession.



Barbara Young

Acting Chairperson January 2023 – May 2023

Barbara joined the Board of RIST in 2015. She has a degree in law and is a member of the Law Institute in Victoria. She has chaired the boards of the Warrnambool and District Base Hospital and South West Healthcare. She has had many years' involvement in the higher education sector in a number of roles at Deakin University. Barbara is a strong advocate of education in the agribusiness sector and its importance for rural communities.



Tony Gregson

AM FRACI FTSE

Tony has a distinguished academic career having held academic appointments at the Universities of Melbourne, Oxford, New England and North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Currently he is Chairman of the Melbourne University Botany Foundation and the Victorian Committee of the Crawford Fund, a Board Member of the Crawford Fund and of FAR (Field Applied Research) Australia. He was elected to the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering in 2003 and made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2009 for his contribution to agricultural research. Tony operates a 3500 hectare property in Western Victoria.



John Stewien

John is a director of ZSA Pty Ltd and an accredited mediator by the Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators. His past positions include a Conciliator with the ACCS Victoria, Commissioner ERC Victoria, Advisor to the Federal Public Service Merit Protection Commission, General Manager Industry/Teaching Services at the Melbourne Institute of Textiles and National General Manager Personnel Operations Kmart Australia, Officer Royal Australian Navy including Commanding Officer HMAS ADVANCE and a Master Mariner – Foreign Ongoing.



John Diprose

OAM

John has had a long association with RIST having been a RIST Board member since 1991 and Chairman from 1996 to 2001 and 2003 to 2009. John brings a wealth of experience to his role with extensive involvement in agri-politics and community organisations at district and national levels. He has also held the position of President at the Hamilton Base Hospital and was the Chairman of the Board of The Hamilton and Alexandra College. He is well versed in the practicalities and challenges of day to day farming as the owner of rural enterprises involving cropping, prime lambs, forestry, dairying, beef and sheep. John was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2016 Australia Day Honours for his services to the community, and to the Uniting Church in Australia.



Fiona Best

Fiona was appointed to the Board in 2023. She is the CEO of Birchip Cropping Group where she works with her team to bring relevant agricultural research and extension opportunities to farming communities by attracting investments to improve the prosperity of broadacre farming locally, regionally and nationally. She has also had extensive experience working in the education sector teaching agriculture. After growing up on her mixed enterprise family farm, cropping and producing sheep, Fiona studied a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Honours) and Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Melbourne. Fiona is the Regional Director, Victoria Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub.



Bruce Keeley

Resigned April 2023

Bruce was raised on a mixed dairy and beef farm and currently has dairy farming interests in New Zealand and Australia. He has an MBA in strategic alliances and an extensive background in commercial financing with institutions in Australia, UK and New Zealand.

He is currently the General Manager of Bade Ness Rural, Warrnambool.

Staff Profiles



Bill Hamill

Chief Executive Officer

Bill is a passionate ambassador for rural Australia and delivering affordable access to quality and industry aligned education to the agricultural sector and young people interested in agriculture. Bill has held a number of board and senior management positions in national companies focusing on rural and regional Australia.

He has successfully overseen significant growth and diversification for RIST over the past nineteen years. Bill was appointed to the newly established Victorian Skills Authority Advisory Board in 2021. Bill also holds positions on the Victorian committee of the Independent Tertiary Education Council of Australia (ITECA) and is a member of ITECA's national VET committee.



Helen Read

Operations Manager

Helen has been with RIST since 2015 and oversees the student management and compliance systems for the organisation. Helen manages administration support for the Vocational Training program, quality management systems, statistical reports and works closely with the Chief Executive Officer in operations, marketing and promotion of RIST programs.



Raelene Laidlaw

Program Coordinator – Wool Classing and Shearing

Raelene joined the organisation in 2012 to assist with the Wool Classing program. Raelene has had extensive experience in the wool industry both as a wool classer and trainer. She completed a Master Classer in 2009. Raelene coordinates the Certificate IV in Wool Classing, the Certificate III in Clip Preparation and administers RIST Shearing and Wool Overview Programs. Raelene is a National Wool Handler judge.



Gaye Cameron

Curriculum Developer

For more than two decades, Gaye has worked with RIST providing expert industry knowledge and training delivery. She assumed the role of RIST Curriculum Developer in 2014 and brings a lifetime of knowledge and practical experience in the development and implementation of course materials, assessment tools and MyAg compliance onto RIST's technology platform. Gaye has extensive experience in the livestock and pasture sectors, in beef, sheep and dairy and in writing course materials and developing assessment tools.



Bec Malseed

National Program Manager

Bec joined the RIST team in February 2017 as our Certificate IV and Diploma Coordinator in the Grazing and Dairy sectors. Prior to this she worked as administration support in the livestock veterinarian industry. In 2019 Bec accepted a new challenge to manage the Lifetime Ewe Management Program. Bec has further grown her position at RIST becoming the National Program Manager and releasing additional training courses Heifers for Profit and Weaners for Profit. Bec is passionate about assisting farmers to achieve best practice skills through our training programs at RIST and building networking opportunities that bring industry wide benefits to producers.



Tamara Hardy

Program Coordinator

Tamara joined the organisation in 2017 and is a Program Coordinator in the traineeship Team, where she coordinates Certificate II and III in Agriculture students. Tamara has an Advanced Diploma in Farm Management as well as extensive industry experience. This includes working for many years in red meat and pasture research with the DPI in Hamilton as well as operating the family farm. Tamara is passionate about the Agricultural Industry and is keen to share her knowledge and enthusiasm with the students. Tamara and her family have a small acreage in Macarthur as well as a cropping property in the Wimmera.



Esther Glasgow

Program Coordinator

Esther re-joined the staff at RIST in January 2018. Esther coordinates the Certificate II and III in Agriculture program in Hamilton and Terang including the VLLS course. Esther was a past student of RIST completing a Certificate III and Diploma of Agriculture. She has extensive experience in the sheep and beef industry and runs her own sheep stud. Esther is also a Red Meat Ambassador for the MLA.



Samantha Dridan

Compliance Officer

Samantha has been with RIST since 2018 and provides assistance in the compliance operations, working closely alongside the Operations Manager with statistical reporting. She also provides administration assistance within the vocational training program, involving student and trainer support. Samantha has an Advanced Diploma of Agriculture, has previously worked in the wool industry. She's assist her parents in their crossbred sheep operation at Moutajup.

Staff Profiles



Yvonne Linke

Accountant

Yvonne joined the team at RIST in July 2019 in the position of Accountant. Her role is to administer the financial management systems within RIST and she is responsible for financial compliance and reporting. Yvonne has worked locally in various finance roles for over 35 years for private business, local government and state government.



John Byron

Program Coordinator and Trainer

John joined RIST as a Program Coordinator in April 2022 prior to this he worked in agricultural research for 20 years as a Technical Officer for Agriculture Victoria at the Hamilton research centre working across a wide range of research projects which included pasture, wool, lamb, beef, and cropping. John also operated a dairy farm at Hawkesdale for 15 years before moving to Hamilton he's been involved in agriculture since leaving school he has knowledge in pasture management from working in the dairy industry and years of experience working with livestock and a wide range of farm machinery.



Kate Carmody

Program Coordinator and Trainer

Kate joined RIST in 2022 as an Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Coordinator and now coordinates the Certificate IV and Diploma students in their studies. Kate is also a trainer and assessor across a number of units. Kate has a background in Accounting and Finance and joined the RIST Team after an extended time working from home alongside her husband and 6 children in a Shearing Contracting Business. Kate holds a Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Business majoring in Financial Planning. Her knowledge and strengths focus around Budgeting, Staffing, Work Health and Safety and Business Planning.



Jess Frankel

Short Course Coordinator

Jess commenced with RIST in early 2023 to oversee the delivery of pre-accredited and short course training. Jess has had extensive experience in the agriculture sector both working for the department and on farm.



Ali Mann

Administration Officer

Ali was appointed in early 2023 as a trainee to assist in the administration of the RIST office. Ali's role works across the vocational and national programs.



Bella Wilson

Social Media & Marketing Coordinator

Bella joined the Administration staff at RIST in 2021. Bella provides assistance and support across all aspects from office administration to course resources and student files. She completed her Certificate III in Business whilst working at RIST. Bella role was expanded in 2023 when she took on the marketing and promotion role.



Evangeline Close

Program Coordinator

Evangeline joined the team at RIST in August 2022 as a program coordinator. She is a past student of RIST completing a certificate III and IV in Agriculture. Evangeline has been working in the beef and sheep industry for a number of years and is passionate about livestock nutrition, genetics and pasture management. On her property she runs Corriedale and Merino ewes as well as Speckle Park and Angus cattle.

Rachael Thompson

Head of Digital

Rachael was employed in November to oversee the new digital strategy RIST is implementing for course delivery and training. Rachael has an extensive background in video and audio productions.

The RIST team would like to acknowledge and thank all our staff who contributed to the organisation's success in 2023

Student Profile – Kerry-Leigh Hume

Kerry-Leigh Hume, a 42-year-old mother of three, is now employed as a full-time dairy farmer at Aurora Dairies in Glenfyne. Currently holding the role of senior farmhand, she is poised to ascend to Assistant Manager by June. Kerry embarked on her educational journey two years ago, initially taking up milking duties at the farm. Encouraged by her manager, she enrolled in an agricultural program at RIST, marking a pivotal moment in her career trajectory. Kerry engaged in various Pre-accredited courses, such as Agricultural Safety Protocols, Ruminant Feeding Strategies, Fundamentals of Animal Nutrition, Soil Basics, and Pasture Plants for Production. She's now on the brink of completing her Certificate IV in Agriculture, with just four units remaining. Already eyeing her next challenge, Kerry contemplates pursuing a Diploma of Agriculture.

Reflecting on her journey, Kerry fondly recalls her manager's unwavering support and guidance throughout her time at RIST and on the farm. Her instructors – Gaye, Kate and Melissa – proved instrumental, accommodating her schedule and providing invaluable assistance whenever needed. She attributes these opportunities to her recent nomination for the Employee Recognition Award at the Great Southwest Dairy Awards.

In contrast to her schooling experience, Kerry finds learning at RIST to be more accommodating and laid-back. She describes the atmosphere as encouraging, fostering growth and adaptability. Kerry emphasises how her educational journey has not only bolstered her skills but also enriched her overall competence and confidence.

(First published by Adult Learning Australia)



Trainer Profile – Kate Carmody

Meet Kate Carmody, a passionate advocate for the high-quality education and training RIST provides. With a background in Accounting and Finance, Kate joined the RIST team after managing a bustling household and running a number of successful businesses with her husband and six children.

Kate was initially employed in 2022 to oversee an Agribusiness Entrepreneurship program. Kate now coordinates the Diploma of Agriculture and Certificate IV in Agriculture Programs and is a trainer and assessor across several units in courses ranging from Certificate II to Diploma of Agriculture.

Kate's expertise and passion lies in Budgeting, Staffing, Work Health and Safety, and Business Planning. She's not just about theory; Kate also brings real-world experience to the table, having spent many years employed in the accounting and finance sectors as well as managing her own businesses.

Kate isn't just a coordinator; she has been heavily involved in promoting RIST to students particularly those wanting more advanced skills, she is also a mentor and provides invaluable support to the students. With her Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Business degrees, specialising in Financial Planning, she's able to convert theory into real life practical skills for the students.



Shearing and Wool Programs

Raelene Laidlaw RIST's Wool Classing trainer had a once in a lifetime opportunity in September to share knowledge and skills beyond Australia's borders, being invited to conduct a number of wool preparation workshops on the Falkland Islands.

Back home, RIST continued its commitment to empowering individuals within the shearing and wool handling industry to enhance their skills and knowledge.

Shearing Schools and Wool Overviews: Four shearing schools were held in Hamilton, Penshurst, and Mortlake areas providing hands-on training and education, equipping participants with essential shearing skills. Additionally, four wool overviews conducted in collaboration with district schools—Monivae College, Mercy College, Good Shepherd College, and Hawkesdale College—offered valuable insights into the wool industry, inspiring the next generation of wool enthusiasts.

Sheepvention: Demonstrations and “come and try” sessions at Sheepvention proved to be popular among attendees of all ages, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for sheep farming and wool production.

Certificate II in Agriculture Electives: Crutching and Wool Handling electives are available to students undertaking a Certificate II in Agriculture, offering learners specialised training in crutching, grinding, board duties, and wool pressing. These electives provide opportunities for students to explore the shearing and wool industry on a deeper level.

Wool Classing: Certificate IV in Wool Classing: Training is now being delivered through the Gippsland region with six students already successfully completing their qualifications. Learners in this program gained practical hands-on experience through in-shed coach, and wool store and sale tours in Melbourne further enriching their understanding of the wool supply chain.

Cert II and Cert III Shearing: Certificate II and III in Shearing: With the assistance of the RSTF project grant, 8 students successfully completed a Certificate II in Shearing in 2023, providing them with the necessary skills to excel in this crucial aspect of wool production. Additionally, one student successfully completed their Certificate III in Shearing, marking a significant milestone in their professional development.



National Programs

RIST's National Training Programs Showcased Strong Growth in 2023

Throughout 2023, RIST's national training programs continued to make significant strides, providing valuable support and knowledge to wool growers and red meat producers across Australia.

Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM): In September 2023, RIST hosted Regional Trainer Forums in Naracoorte and Dubbo, fostering collaboration among trainers from various regions. In Naracoorte, trainers from South-West Victoria and South Australia joined forces, while Dubbo saw trainers from New South Wales, Tasmania, and Northern Victoria come together.

A key milestone was the commencement of a new contract with Australian Wool Innovation (AWI), marked by the launch of LTEM 9. This initiative welcomed 225 participants throughout the year, with AWI generously subsidizing \$900 per wool grower. Additionally, FeedTest continued to support LTEM participants by offering a 10% discount on NIR fodder testing, further enhancing the program's value and accessibility.

Heifers for Profit (HFP): In 2023, HFP saw improved growth, with three groups commencing under Rob Inglis in Goulburn, Bungendore, and Coolac areas of NSW. Another group, led by Molly Kalman and Steph Warrick, started in the Naracoorte area, supported by a contract with Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) under the Profitable Grazing Systems program.

Weaners for Profit (WFP): RIST's WFP course also saw expansion, thanks to partnerships with local organisations. The Local Land Service (LLS) subsidised the WFP course in NSW, with Rob Inglis delivering sessions for groups in Carrathool and Paraway. Additionally, the Limestone Coast Landcare Board provided subsidies exclusively for residents in the region. Jonathan England and Tim Leeming commenced training sessions in the Limestone Coast and Wrattenbullie areas, respectively, in 2023.

Australian Wool Education Trust

The Australian Wool Education Trust and in 2023 generously provided scholarships to the value of \$9,000.00 to students undertaking studies in merino wool production at RIST.

Scott Evans
Alexandra Voigt
Maia Ratana

Natalie Morton
Mikaylah Sharrock
Tia Hauraki

Ronelle Welton
Yvonne Gulle
Aleisha Te Maipi

We sincerely thank the Wool Education Trust for these very generous scholarships which have enabled students to undertake education and training in merino wool production and handling, enhancing their ongoing career opportunities in this sector.

Victorian Livestock Loading Scheme

In 2023, RIST partnered with LRTAV to enrol 31 participants in the Victorian Livestock Loading Scheme. All successfully completed the course, learning vital skills for safe livestock transportation, reducing injuries, and enhancing efficiency. Attendees hailed from Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales, reflecting the program's broad reach. Leveraging digital platforms like Zoom, RIST

conducted bi-monthly sessions, making training accessible to all despite geographical barriers. This adaptive approach ensured the seamless dissemination of crucial knowledge, contributing to safer roads and more efficient livestock transport. RIST's commitment to excellence in education and industry advancement remains unwavering.



Certificate II and III in Agriculture

Certificate II in Agriculture: This program immersed students in a hands-on learning journey, providing them with practical skills vital for the agricultural sector. They participated in calf marking sessions, deftly marking numerous calves for local producers, and experienced the intricacies of lamb marking, a fundamental aspect of livestock management. Engaging in yard maintenance tasks for the Department of Agriculture, students not only contributed to farm infrastructure but also honed their understanding of farm operations.

Basic machinery operations became second nature to students as they learned to handle farm equipment, a skill crucial for day-to-day tasks.

Under the tutelage of industry experts Joe Spicer and Scott Mullins, students learnt low-stress stock handling techniques, refining their approach to livestock management.

Industry exposure played a pivotal role in their learning journey. Visits to local farms provided firsthand insights, with farmers generously sharing their knowledge and expertise. A trip to a local dairy offered a glimpse into the calving process and calf rearing practices, enriching students' understanding of animal husbandry. Shearing shed visits offered practical exposure to wool handling, crutching, and grinding, essential skills in the agricultural landscape.

Certificate III in Agriculture: Building upon their foundational knowledge, students embarked on a journey of discovery in the Certificate III program, exploring progressive local farms and expanding their agricultural horizons. Farm visits opened doors to new pastures, crops, and innovative farming practices. Conversations with producers at Grange Garlic, Byaduk, and other farms sparked creativity, inspiring students with fresh ideas for implementation in the workplace.

Practical skill extension sessions delved into plant nutrition and crop establishment, empowering students with the know-how to optimise crop yields.

A welding course added a touch of craftsmanship to their repertoire, as they crafted their own bag trolleys, blending practical skills with creativity.

Specialised training took their learning to new heights. A two-day working dog school, led by renowned breeder and trainer Joe Spicer, offered an immersive experience in livestock management, with students mastering the art of working with trained dogs.



Diploma of Agriculture and
Certificate IV in Agriculture

Graduation

The Diploma of Agriculture program in 2023 continues to serve as a robust platform for cultivating managerial-level skills within the agricultural sector. Designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of various facets of the industry, including business management, farm planning, budgeting, livestock production, agronomy, work health safety, and staffing, this qualification sets the stage for aspiring professionals to excel in their careers.

Offered over one or two years, the program accommodates the diverse needs of students, with classes available at both Hamilton, Terang and through our virtual classroom facility. This flexibility enables individuals to delve deeply into their studies, honing their expertise and preparing them for roles as farm managers, owners, or agribusiness leaders.

In parallel, the Certificate IV in Agriculture program equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge to take on leadership roles within the agricultural domain. With a curriculum spanning livestock production, agronomy, agribusiness, work health and safety, and entrepreneurship, participants undergo a transformative journey over the course of 12 months or 24 months.

What sets this qualification apart is its adaptability. Offered across multiple delivery points, including Hamilton, Terang or through virtual classrooms, students have the freedom to choose the location that aligns best with their needs and commitments. This accessibility ensures that individuals can pursue their educational goals without sacrificing travel time away from work.

Under the guidance of leading industry trainers, the Certificate IV & Diploma, students produce work of exceptional quality. Their achievements serve as a testament to the rigorous education and training offered at RIST.

Upon completion of these programs, graduates emerge equipped with the practical skills and expertise needed to assume supervisory or leadership positions within agricultural enterprises. They stand ready to make meaningful contributions to the industry and drive its continued growth and innovation in the years to come.



Pre-Accredited Training

Pre-Accredited Training Courses Offered in 2023 by RIST

In 2023, RIST, continued its commitment to offering a diverse array of pre-accredited training courses. These courses were meticulously crafted to furnish students with vital skills and knowledge, either as a stepping stone towards further accredited training or as a means to enhance their proficiency in the workplace. Addressing various aspects of agriculture and technology, these courses were tailored to accommodate individuals of different age groups and skill levels.

Animal Nutrition: The Animal Nutrition course remained a cornerstone, aiming to impart learners with fundamental skills and knowledge essential for optimising animal health and performance in agriculture. Participants delved into livestock condition assessment, pasture evaluation for a balanced diet, introduction of feed supplements,

and ensuring feed quality for optimal livestock health. Emphasis was placed on safe feeding practices to safeguard both animals and learners.

Chainsaw Operations: Continuing its emphasis on safety, the Chainsaw Operations course equipped learners with essential skills in operating and maintaining chainsaws safely. Instruction included adherence to best practice for personal protective equipment and comprehension of workplace health and safety principles. Through hands-on learning, participants gained proficiency in basic branch and limb trimming and timber handling on the ground.

Introduction to Excel: Addressing the needs of young learners enrolled in agricultural certificate programs, the Introduction to Excel course equipped them with basic Microsoft Excel skills. By fostering confidence in Excel usage, learners were prepared for their accredited training journey at RIST.

Mobile Digital Technology: Similarly, the Mobile Digital Technology course targeted individuals with limited understanding of mobile digital technology, aiming to maximize its benefits in both educational and workplace settings. Learners gained practical skills in utilising mobile devices to enhance their learning and productivity.

ATV/SBS: Prioritising safety in agricultural operations, the ATV/SBS course provided learners with essential skills in operating quad bikes and side-by-sides safely. Emphasis was placed on risk awareness and practical skills sought by agricultural employers.

Soil Chemistry: The Soil Chemistry course catered to individuals lacking basic chemistry knowledge, providing foundational understanding essential for accredited agricultural training.

Tractor/Front End Loader (FEL): Similarly, the Tractor/FEL course equipped learners with practical skills in operating tractors and front-end loaders safely, meeting industry demands for skilled operators.

Introduction to Welding: The Introduction to Welding course offered hands-on experience in welding, preparing learners for employment opportunities in engineering and agriculture through practical-based learning.



Where Are They Now?

RIST graduates are engaged in exciting and fulfilling careers across the agricultural sector and beyond. They demonstrate that there is no limit to the choices available to our graduates.



Jack Rigby

Since completing his Certificate III in Agriculture in 2020 Jack has worked in the agricultural industry predominantly with large machinery including tractors, harvesters, balers, and rakes. Jack currently travels regularly to NSW where he harvests canola and other crops. Jack has always loved machinery and enjoys the travel and variety of work his current job provides.



Claire Foster

Claire completed her Certificate IV in Agriculture at RIST in 2021. She now works full-time within her family's successful angus beef and prime lamb farming enterprise Boonaroo. Claire focuses on maintaining stud records, collecting DNA from animals, and managing calves from birth.

In addition to her work on the farm Claire pursues her interest in horses and has had many wins in the showjumping arena.



Rory Speirs

Rory Speirs completed his Certificate II in Agriculture in 2015. The practical skills he gained throughout the course coupled with his work placement assisted him in meeting the requirements for entering Veterinary Bioscience at the University of Adelaide. Rory is now working as a vet in a mixed practice that has clinics in both Naracoorte and Penola.

Your Season Your Success

In August 2022, RIST was successful in obtaining project funding for *Reducing CO2 Emissions in the Sheep Industry* through the Clean Economy Workforce Capability Building Fund (CEWCBF) funded by the Victorian Government – Department of Jobs Skills Industry and Regions (DJSIR). This fund focused on sectors of the Victorian economy impacted by climate change to enable industry to transition towards a clean economy. The project deliverable was to design and pilot digital assets housed on an App. The new App was to build sheep industry productivity and enable producers to contribute to environmental, social, and economic gains in Victoria. The priority investment focused on raising sheep workforce awareness and building capability to support delivery of the Victorian Government net zero emissions by 2050 commitment.

Through collaboration and key project partnerships with industry consultants, R&D experts, RIST staff, and supportive Victorian producers, the project is on track for successful delivery of all project outcomes by quarter 1 2024, and the launch of RIST's new program **Your Season Your Success** – will take place shortly thereafter. This project has delivered:

- **App** - accessible on Android, iOS, desktop Windows and Mac, and Virtual Reality headsets– Quest Meta 2 & 3.

- **5 e-learning Modules** - integrated with Your Season Your Success app
- **5 Companion e-books** - with quick access navigation links.
- **Farm FIT (Flexibility Indicator Tool)** self-assessment calculator to help sheep producers to benchmark their on-farm resilience based on their production management flexibility.
- **Farming to Your Credit** - immersive virtual reality experience to raise awareness and understanding of how selected production management practices can influence on-farm productivity and emissions intensity.
- **Virtual Farm Tours** - explorative and immersive virtual reality case study experiences specific to production management strategies employed by two different sheep enterprises located within regional Victoria.
- **E-learning Digital Badging** - to promote, through metadata, a learner's successful completion of the App program shareable through social media platforms.



Success is different for everyone, and it is RIST's aim to provide innovative and relevant education and training to ensure all students reach their career goals.

