



Annual Report 2025



An Agricultural College
With A Difference.

rist.edu.au



We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of this country throughout Australia, their connection to land and community. We pay our respects to their Culture and their Elders - past, present and emerging

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Chairman's Report



Tony
Fleetwood
RIST CHAIRMAN

As I reflect on the past year, I am proud to report that 2025 has been a year of milestone and momentum for RIST.

The ongoing implementation of the campus modernisation and equipment upgrades made possible through the generous support of the Victorian Government has delivered facilities that now fully match the high calibre of our programs, and we are already seeing the benefits flow through to our students and trainers.

2025 also marks a proud institutional moment: the year in which we held our 21st Graduation Ceremony, celebrating the achievements of 105 graduating students in our vocational programs and the 232 participants completing their courses in Lifetime Ewe Management and our national programs. This is a testament to the quality and relevance of our programs, and to the students who brought dedication, passion for agriculture, and genuine perseverance to their studies.

Despite a complex operating environment for the agricultural and VET sectors, RIST has continued to consolidate its position as one of Australia's leading non-public providers of agricultural training. The demand for our graduates from employers remains strong and continues to grow, affirming the real-world value of the education we deliver.

RIST stands unique in offering a fully integrated educational pathway – from pre-accredited education and traineeships through to higher education – complemented by our broad range

of non-accredited short course programs. The Lifetime Ewe Management program continues its standing as the most successful sheep extension program ever delivered in Australia, and our national reach through our other fee-for-service courses reinforces RIST's reputation as a premier agricultural college.

As the agricultural sector evolves, we remain committed to equipping students not only with technical skills, but with the critical thinking and communication capabilities they need to thrive in an increasingly complex and technology-driven industry.

Our long-standing partnerships with AWI and MLA at a national level and the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments, Agriculture Victoria and school networks across Victoria continue to underpin our success, enabling comprehensive education pathways for students at every stage of their journey.

I extend my sincere appreciation to my fellow Board members, our outstanding staff, and CEO Bill Hamill for their expertise, commitment, and leadership throughout the year. To our students, parents, employers, schools, trainers and host farms – thank you for your continued trust and enthusiasm. Together, we look forward with great optimism to the future.

“RIST has continued to consolidate its position as one of Australia's leading non-public providers of agricultural training.”



CEO's Report



Bill Hamill
RIST CEO

It is with enormous pride that I present the CEO Report for 2025 — a year that has deepened RIST’s resolve to deliver world-class agricultural education and cement our place at the forefront of innovation in the VET sector.

The momentum of RIST’s \$1.6 million campus and technology transformation — begun in 2023-24 — carried into 2025 with the introduction of something truly extraordinary: the Igloo. This immersive 360-degree learning environment allows us to take students inside the biology of a ruminant digestive system, deep into soil and nutrient dynamics, or across virtual landscapes that no field trip could replicate. It is not a gimmick — it is a serious educational tool that brings the invisible world of agriculture to life in ways simply not possible before.

Yet for all the power of technology, 2025 was equally defined by a deliberate return to the paddock. Our revitalised team made an unwavering commitment to on-farm experience, partnering with some of the most respected producers and industry experts in our region. Students walked through working properties, observed modern farming technology in action, and engaged with producers at the leading edge of their industries. That experience — the combination of innovation and lived reality — cannot be manufactured. It must be lived. And it is precisely that combination which gives our graduates their competitive edge.

To every producer, farm family, and industry leader who opened their gates to RIST this year:

thank you. Your generosity of time, knowledge, and access will pay dividends for this industry for decades to come.

But technology is only ever a tool. I challenge our students to let curiosity be their compass — to be courageous in the face of disruption, humble enough to keep learning, and kind enough to bring others with them. Those qualities will distinguish them far more than any qualification. The real magic of RIST has always been human: the dedication of our trainers, the unwavering commitment of our staff, and the spirit of our students.

To the RIST Board — thank you for your expert leadership and your support throughout my 23-year tenure at RIST. To our industry partners — AWI, MLA, Agriculture Victoria, AWET, our host farms, and the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments — your collaboration and support makes everything possible. And to our students, their families, and our partner schools and employers: thank you for placing your trust in RIST.

The future of agriculture is in our graduates’ hands. And I could not be more confident in what they will do with it.



Director Profiles



Tony Fleetwood

CHAIRMAN

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 Master of Taxation and has in excess of 35 years in the Chartered Accounting profession.



Lachie Brown

Lachie joined the board of RIST in 2024. He is State Wool Manager Victoria/Riverina, South Australia, and Tasmania for Elders Ltd. Prior to this he held roles with AWB in grower services and marketing. After growing up on his family wool/prime lamb property, Lachie studied a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at University of Melbourne. He is passionate about educating and developing the next generation of talent in agriculture and is heavily involved in training and mentoring in the wool industry.



Barbara Young

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

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.



Fiona Best

Fiona joined the RIST 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.



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.

Staff Profiles

Bill Hamill

CEO

Bill is 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 twenty years. Bill was reappointed to the Victorian Skills Authority Advisory Board in 2025. Bill also held 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

HEAD OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Helen has been with RIST since 2015 and is responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient management of RIST’s physical and digital interfacing systems, with a strong focus on compliance and operational integrity. Helen oversees the organisation’s student management and compliance systems, supports administration for the Vocational Training program, and manages quality systems and statistical reporting. Helen works closely with the Chief Executive Officer to support organisational operations, marketing, and the promotion of RIST programs.

Belinda Kim

HEAD OF PROGRAM DELIVERY

Belinda joined the RIST leadership team in February 2025 to review and manage RIST program design and delivery. Her expertise is in project management, enhancing staff capability, innovative training design and stakeholder engagement. Belinda has undertaken a variety of senior roles within the VET and Higher Education sector both abroad and within Australia. She holds a Master of Education – Applied Linguistics and post-graduation qualifications in Health Science. Belinda comes from a dairy and beef background, now with small acreages located in Kolora and Hamilton.

Bec Malseed

NATIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER

Bec joined the RIST team in February 2017 and moved into the National Program Manager role. In 2025, Bec left RIST to pursue other opportunities.

Natasha Wilkinson

NATIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER

Natasha joined the RIST team in July 2025 to lead the development and delivery of RIST’s National Programs which includes the highly successful, Lifetime Ewe Management course, Weaners for Profit, Heifers for Profit and Your Season Your Success. With a strong business background and skills in regional tourism and business development, Natasha was well positioned to enter the Vocational Education and Training sector, where she coordinated the delivery of stakeholder engagement activities across the Southwest for the past nine years in an education setting. Natasha understands the importance of creating practical, industry-aligned learning pathways which help to support the next generation of skilled producers and strengthen the future of Australia’s rural industries.

Tara Rich

MARKETING LEAD

Tara joined the RIST team in March 2024. She lives on her family-owned cropping and sheep enterprise in the West Wimmera with her husband and three children. With a background in Policing before completing a Bachelor of Business (Management), Tara has worked in Communication's and digital marketing as an agricultural marketing specialist. With a passion to authentically showcase the people of Australian Agriculture, she is excited to share more stories of past and present RIST students, staff and trainers, and to continue to promote Agriculture and Wool as incredible career pathways for people of all stages and ages to enter. Tara finished at RIST in December 2025.

Samantha Dridan

COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Samantha joined RIST in September 2018 to provide administration assistance in the curriculum and compliance functions within the operations. Samantha has an advanced Diploma of Agriculture and has been working in the wool and sheep industry for a number of years. In August, Samantha went on maternity leave for 12-months.

Christine Harris

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR – COMPLIANCE & QUALITY ASSURANCE

Christine brings over 36 years of administrative experience across the legal and medical fields, with much of my career focused in the education sector –both in Tertiary and, more recently, the VET sector. Christine is passionate about lifelong learning and committed to ensuring our students receive the highest-quality educational experience possible at RIST, grounded in industry best practice. Having lived in Southwest Victoria her entire life, Christine has developed a deep connection to the agricultural sector, which informs her work and strengthens her understanding of the communities RIST serves.

Derran Heney

QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICER

Derran brings over 25 years of mental health nursing experience, alongside extensive clinical teaching experience delivering Certificate IV and Diploma-level Community Services and Health (Nursing) training packages within the VET sector. She has a strong background in curriculum development and student mentorship, with a particular commitment to supporting diverse learners across a range of clinical and educational settings. Derran brings this combined experience to her current role as Quality Assurance Officer at Rural Industries Skills Training (RIST), where she leads assessment validation, compliance documentation, and continuous quality improvement across agricultural qualifications from Certificate II to Diploma level Training Packages.

Andrea Speirs

E-LEARNING DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Andrea joined the RIST team in March 2024. Andrea is an experienced administrator skilled in business management, reporting and stakeholder relations with a strong background in administration, policy writing and budgeting. Andrea holds a Master of Arts in Writing and Literature and is pursuing a WHS certification. In addition, Andrea has strong ties to agriculture and has resided on a farm in the local area for the past 26-years. Andrea finished with RIST in September 2025.

Raelene Laidlaw

PROGRAM COORDINATOR – WOOL CLASSING & 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 and a number of Trainees as well as administering the Shearing Program. Raelene is a National Wool Handler judge. Raelene finished working with RIST in December 2025.

Tamara Hardy

PROGRAM COORDINATOR – CERTIFICATE II & III IN AGRICULTURE

Tamara joined RIST 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. Tamara finished working with RIST in June 2025.

John Byron

TRAINER & ASSESSOR

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. John finished working with RIST in September 2025.

Elle Bryant

PROGRAM SUPPORT OFFICER

Elle joined the RIST team in August 2024. With a veterinary technician background she brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to our staff skill set in dairy and livestock production for our Certificate IV and Diploma programs. Elle moved on to pursue other opportunities in April 2025.

Sarah Hamilton

PROGRAM SUPPORT – CERTIFICATE II & CERTIFIATE III

Sarah joined RIST in February 2025. Sarah lives with her family on a farm at Cavendish where they breed prime lambs, self-replacing first cross ewes along with running a 32-year-old Border Leicester stud. They also have a small Wessex Saddleback Pig enterprise supplying pork direct to consumers at Christmas. Sarah has an Advanced Diploma in Agriculture and is passionate about sheep ruminant nutrition. She enjoys applying and sharing her knowledge, experience and enthusiasm with students. Sarah previously worked locally as a Large Animal Vet Nurse for seven years and farming in the area for 16-years.

Jacqui Tribe

PROGRAM COORDINATOR – PRE-ACCREDITED & ACCREDITED SHORT COURSES

Jacqui is an experienced Trainer and Assessor serving as Program Coordinator to our Learn Local pre-accredited courses as well as our accredited short courses. With a strong background in vocational education, she designs and delivers training pathways that connect learners with meaningful opportunities. Her commitment to learner-centred education ensures that participants gain practical, industry-relevant skills that support their career development and contribute to the agricultural workforce.

Bill Cornelissen

TRAINER & ASSESSOR

Bill commenced in September 2025 as a trainer and assessor for the Certificate II and III programs. Bill had a wide range of experience both as a trainer and as a Dairy farmer and he brought this knowledge to the classroom.



Lily Godde

PROGRAM SUPPORT

Lily commenced in a Program Support role in September 2025. Lily has a background in the livestock industry and manages a student case load of Trainees. She is completing her Certificate IV in Agriculture at RIST.

Bella Wilson

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Bella re-joined the Administration staff for a short period in 2025. Bella provided assistance and support across all aspects from office administration to course resources and student files before pursuing her love of travel.

Su-Riann Kim

ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

Su-Riann joined the organisation in December 2025, after completing Year 12, to work as Administration Support. Su-Riann provides assistance across a range of office administration duties including student files, course resources, and training logistics. She is currently on a gap year, undergoing a Certificate III in Business whilst working at RIST.



Oliver's Story

Oliver Credlin, Certificate II in Agriculture

Oliver knew RIST was the right choice for him when he went 'out of the classroom and around the RIST farm'. The hands-on nature of learning provided him with practical opportunities with an outdoor focus.

Oliver graduated from his Certificate II in Agriculture earlier this year. He completed his qualification during Year 10 at The Hamilton and Alexandra College, where his training inspired him to 'learn more about the business of farming', and lead him to choosing Maths, Science and Accounting VCE subjects.

Coming from a broadacre cropping farm, with minimal livestock experience, Oliver was able to gain basic skills in sheep and cattle to broaden his understanding of livestock enterprises. Despite the majority of his work placement hours being on the family farm, he was able to spend time with an Agronomist and a Grain research organisation. These experiences shaped his understanding of the various jobs available in Agriculture.

Oliver received the Certificate II in Agriculture RIST Innovator and Leader Award for his 'give it a go - give everything a go' attitude. As he says -

"If you get an opportunity to do something, just have a go."

Oliver is a curious learner and thrived on new learning experiences - learning about different enterprises within the agriculture industry from different trainers and producers with unique perspectives. His qualities as a leader were showcased in his ability to lead by example, with confidence and maturity beyond his years. Oliver sees his future in agriculture - particularly his passion for cropping enterprises.

Jacob's Story

Jacob Sanderson, Certificate III in Agriculture

Jacob's shearing journey started back in Year 7 at Heywood District Secondary College. When at 13 years old, he picked up a handpiece for the first time when the school needed someone to shear their sheep. What began as a helping hand, has now turned into a passion project. Jacob recognising the value of shearing—not just as a vital farming skill, but also as a great source of income for the future.

Fast forward to today and Jacob's commitment has already earned him some impressive accolades. He has won the Novice Shearing section of the Natimuk Show as well as second place in Novice Shearing and the Junior Encouragement Award at the Bendigo Sheep and Wool Show.

He also competed in the World Skills Nationals, winning gold medal in VETDSS Metals and Engineering section and qualifying for the World Skills International event held in Shanghai.

Jacob completed his Certificate II in Agriculture with RIST in 2024 and most recently, a Certificate III in Agriculture in 2025. At Graduation this year Jacob received the RIST 'Values in Action Award' - a testament to his character, professionalism and positive contribution to the Wool and Agriculture industry. His advice to students is to -

"Immerse yourself in the industry, push through the tough times, and surround yourself with knowledgeable people."



Breanna's Story

Breanna Stewart, Certificate IV in Agriculture

"Completing my Certificate IV was a pivotal experience, shaped by the guidance of dedicated trainers, mentors, and peers."

Through a mix of classroom learning, farm tours, hands-on experience, and exposure to emerging technologies such as AI, Breanna significantly expanded both her knowledge and perspective within the industry.

These experiences not only strengthened her practical skills but also built lasting confidence.

Breanna was fortunate to participate in farm study tours supported by Demo Dairy such as the Gippsland Dairy Tour 2025, gaining valuable real-world insight. A standout achievement has been Breanna's selection for a international study tour to the Netherlands, funded by Lely, where she will explore international dairy systems, an opportunity made possible by the confidence and pathways RIST has provided her.

Breanna feels strongly that her Certificate IV in Agriculture with RIST equipped her to confidently contribute to industry discussions and continue growing within the sector.

This year at Graduation, Breanna was awarded the Excellence in Action award, as recognition for her advanced technical application and high-performance throughout RIST training.



Agriculture Courses

Certificate II in Agriculture

With a focus on practical, relevant skill development, the Certificate II program continues to grow and expand year on year. Students participated in a broad range of hands on learning covering basic farm machinery, fencing, livestock handling, workplace communications, farm water supply, animal welfare, workplace health and safety and electives such as crutching, wool handling, agronomy and dairy. Industry exposure plays a pivotal role in their learning journey with visits to local farms where businesses generously sharing their knowledge and expertise, and also provide opportunities to practice work-place relevant skills in real life.

Certificate III in Agriculture

Building upon their foundational knowledge, students undertake an 18 month learning journey which expands both their skills and agricultural horizons. Students graduated in 2024 from this challenging program which covers topics from animal health, biosecurity and agronomy to chemical use, welding and technology. Visits and practical opportunities with local host farms continues to provide access to new and innovative farming practices and thinking, challenging our students perspectives and outlooks.

Certificate IV in Agriculture

With a curriculum spanning livestock production, agronomy, agribusiness, work health and safety and entrepreneurship, learners undertaking their Certificate IV in Agriculture undertake a transformative journey over the course of 12 to 24 months. What sets this qualification apart is its adaptability. Offered across multiple delivery points, including Hamilton, Terang and 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.

Diploma of Agriculture

Deliberately structured to provide aspiring, new or established farm business workers or managers with a comprehensive understanding of various facets of the industry, the Diploma of Agriculture challenges and extends learners. Industry leading experts are engaged to cover topics such as business management, farm planning, budgeting, livestock production, agronomy, work health safety, and staffing. Participants delve deeply into their own enterprises building the tools and resources they need to not only learn but develop their role and business.



Shearing & Wool Courses

Certificate II and Certificate III in Shearing

With significant changes to the training packages for both these qualifications coming into effect in early 2025, neither programs were run during the year as course resources and materials were being reviewed and updated.

Certificate IV in Wool Classing

Certificate IV in Wool Classing was delivered from our campus in Hamilton and also in Gippsland in 2025. 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. Twelve students graduated in 2025. Significant changes to the Wool Classing qualification came into effect in early 2025 resulting in no new cohorts commencing during the year.

Careers in Wool

The Wool Overview Program provides participants with foundational knowledge of wool production, classing and handling. This highly successful program was again delivered in early 2025 through the generous support of AWI. Twenty school children from year 9 and 10 participated in these workshops. A special thank you to the host farmers that opened their shearing sheds for the practical demonstrations.



National Programs

A YEAR OF RENEWED OPTIMISM

2025 again presented a series of challenges for Australian farmers, particularly across regions that experienced a severe lack of autumn rain, resulting in minimal pasture growth heading into winter.

This unprecedented dry spell forced many farmers to adapt their feeding strategies to embrace containment feeding systems to minimise the impact on already stressed pastures.

The welcome rain in spring in the southwest of Victoria, while a much lower average than normal, fell at the right time providing a substantial feed wedge to finish the year, this combined with record prices for lamb and sheep provided much needed respite for producers.

The feedback from participants who undertook LTEM through this period was very positive, with many indicating that the course assisted them in managing animal welfare issues, financially and emotionally, through networking with other producers experiencing similar circumstances.

Interest in the Weaners for Profit and Heifers for Profit courses lifted in 2025. The Weaners for Profit course presented an opportunity for participants who had previously completed the Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM), to come together again and undertake additional training, as a natural extension of their previous learning. Increased enrolments were received in the second half of the year for both courses with increased growth forecast in 2026.

We continued to attract and retain quality trainers to deliver the National Program courses throughout Australia. A key strength of our trainer recruitment is in the development of our mentoring program, which enables our new trainers to feel supported throughout their journey. Providing opportunities for them to develop post-graduate knowledge of condition scoring and its impact on production and grazing systems, in a supportive environment, alongside more experienced trainers, helps to address any skills or knowledge gaps and enhances their ongoing training experience.

Additionally, we introduced a quarterly newsletter specifically for our National Program trainers which helps to inform them of course updates, marketing activities, professional development opportunities and helps to further connect them to RIST and to also to one another.

ONGOING SUPPORT & COLLABORATION

For almost 20-years, Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) has provided generous financial support for the LTEM program, ensuring generations of producers across Australia, benefit from this industry training now and into the future. RIST is grateful for AWI's ongoing support and look forward to continuing this valuable partnership in 2026.



“The course was completed during a very difficult season so hopefully the benefits will become apparent in future years.”

LTEM Participant

“Just want to say thank you for providing a course like this to help producers get the most out of the land. It’s a really valuable asset to have.”

LTEM Participant

“A great course that everyone who owns sheep should have to undertake.”

LTEM Participant

“Great group, great facilitator, the course exceeded my expectations.”

LTEM Participant

“I have really enjoyed the course and its overall content. There is a lot of information to digest but it has given me a better understanding of how I need to treat my ewes and improve overall production and efficiency in our stock program.”

LTEM Participant

RIST also acknowledges Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS) program for its financial support of our Weaners for Profit and Heifers for Profit courses which grows in strength each year.

TRAINER HIGHLIGHTS & PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Feedback from participants has been tremendously positive with high participant satisfaction results in LTEM with the trainers, the course content and social interactions, culminating in tangible behaviour changes on farm including implementing regular condition scoring (CS) and monitoring the quality of feed and adjusting it accordingly to meet CS targets at key times throughout the year.

Note: Participant quotes and feedback are based on anonymous survey responses and personal interviews conducted throughout the year.



Pre-accredited Training

RIST delivered workshops offering critical skills and knowledge in specific areas of agriculture and technology designed to provide agricultural workers with the skills they need, when they need them.

2025 saw significant overhauls of the accredited Short Course offerings in terms of both delivery options and compliance with the 2025 RTO Standards. While the traditional option of Learners participating in training at RIST campuses continues, diversification of offering was established via a new Corporate Short Course model – providing training to Learners to further develop their skills with equipment they use every day in the location in which they use it.

Animal Nutrition

Designed to provide learners with the basic skills and knowledge of animal nutrition and the role it plays in maximising animal health and performance in agriculture. Learners develop the skills to analyse livestock condition and health, as well as the knowledge to assess pastures to ensure livestock are receiving a balanced and nutritious diet.

Basic Chainsaw Operations

Focussing on the basic essential skills in and practical experience in operating and maintaining a chainsaw safely, participants perform tasks in a safe work manner ensuring personal protective equipment complies with Australian Standards and understanding the importance of workplace health and safety principles.

Excel

Introductory and Intermediate: designed to assist learners who do not have the basic skills in Microsoft Excel to gain confidence and familiarity with the software. As their skills develop, and they require additional skills, the intermediate course will then extend learners with exposure to more advanced functions and tools within the software.



Introduction to Soils

Catered to individuals who feel they do not have the basic chemistry knowledge needed, this workshop provides foundational understanding across soil composition, formation and structure, fertility and chemical composition.

Introduction to Welding

With a focus on practical based experiential learning, this workshop assists participants gain basic knowledge and practical skills for welding with MIG (gas metal arc) welding processes, as well as an understanding of the importance of workplace health and safety principles.

Pasture Plants for Production

With a focus on basic plant identification, this workshop covers the basics of plant and species recognition as relevant to an agricultural enterprise. The goal is to assist learners develop their knowledge, confidence and skills in plant and weed identification to support them in their day to day roles.

Ruminant Nutrition

Designed to provide the fundamental skills and knowledge to understand rumen function and how management impacts on its efficiency. Learners develop skills and knowledge relating to nutritional components and quality testing of feed, basic digestive anatomy and rumen function, impacts of management decisions on the rument and herd/flock health.



2025 Events Overview

Information Sessions

Held annually in August, our Information Sessions offered prospective students, their families and employers an insight into what studying agriculture with RIST will look like. Extremely high attendance at these sessions held both on campus and virtually where RIST staff and trainers could meet and answer attendees questions.

Careers in Agriculture Taster Day

Hosted by RIST for the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network (GSGLLEN), the Careers in Agriculture Taster Day provides secondary school students through the Glenelg and Southern Grampians region the opportunity to get hands and exposed to the wide range of career pathways the agriculture industry offers. Students from Monivae College, Baimbridge College, Good Shepherd College, The Hamilton and Alexandra College, and Heywood Secondary College joined us on the day where they got to participate in livestock handling, agri-tech, agronomy, shearing and wool handling activities.

Sheepvention

Sheepvention 2025 had record-breaking attendance with thousands of people coming through the gates. We again saw massive interest in our technology and simulators, and catching up with current and past students and trainers across the two days.



LTEM Trainer Forum

The Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) Trainer Forum brings together trainers to share knowledge and align program delivery. The program is now coordinated by Natasha Wilkinson.



Graduation 2025





Jeremy Upton Scholarship



Honouring Legacy through building the next generation

In 2023, RIST established the Jeremy Upton Scholarship in the legacy of the late Jeremy Upton.

The Scholarship supports recipients by providing essential financial assistance towards the costs of tuition fees and other educational expenses so they can fully participate in their education and pursue their career aspirations.

Over 38-years, Jeremy Upton built a strong reputation as a leader and manager within the agricultural industry in Australia and overseas. He was a respected Australian Hereford breeder and General Manager at Yarram Park, a 9200-hectare property located on the eastern foothills of the Grampians in Southwest Victoria.

Jeremy made a significant contribution to RIST as a member of the RIST Board for 16-years, seven of these years as Chairman. During his tenure, Jeremy provided outstanding commitment to and leadership of RIST.

Jeremy was passionate about fostering the next generation of agricultural leaders and growing the potential of young people in agriculture and to opportunities for lifelong learning.

Australian Wool Education Trust Scholarship

Katy McMahon

Katy McMahon was awarded a Australian Wool Education Scholarship to assist with tuition fees for her enrolment in the Diploma of Agriculture. We sincerely thank the Australian Wool

Education Trust for their continuing involvement in the provision of scholarships to undertake education and training aligned with the wool industry.



Trainer Acknowledgement

We would like to thank all trainers who have contributed to our programs throughout 2025. We sincerely appreciate the knowledge and expertise you share with our students.

Mark Allington
Garry Armstrong
Laura Broughton
John Byron
Nick Carmody
Shane Carmody
Bill Cornelissen
Steve Cotton
Sarah Davey
Samantha Dridan
Tanya Ginns
Lily Godde
Bronte Gorringe
Bill Hamill
Sarah Hamilton

Tamara Hardy
Rob Inglis
Bruce Jackson
Lewis Kahn
Molly Kalman
Jillian Kelly
Trevor (Dave) Kelly
Belinda Kim
Raelene Laidlaw
Timothy Leeming
Lexie Leonard
Harry Linke
Sean McGrath
Jim Meckiff
Laura Molloy

Scott Mullins
Mark Purcell
Helen Read
Jessica Revell
Andrea Roberts
Kathryn Robertson
Megan Rogers
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