

RACV Royal Pines Resort
Ross Street, Ashmore
Gold Coast, Queensland

7 - 9 March 2016



**Australian
Summer Grains
Conference**

Securing our future



Value of Women in Grain to be addressed at Summer Grains Conference

Women are an often undervalued resource in agriculture. Whilst some rural industries have higher levels of female involvement, the grains industry tends to have only a small number of women actively involved in leadership roles. To highlight this issue, the Australian Summer Grains conference will address issues around how to encourage more women to become actively involved in the industry.

The Australian Summer Grains Conference is well known for highlighting the latest in new technology and research. They are also no stranger to emphasising areas where their industry can improve. Women are often behind the scenes on farms, but for the industry to reach its full potential women must be encouraged to step forward into more active roles.

Chair of the Australian Summer Grains Conference Maree Crawford says that her experience in the grains industry has always been very positive, largely due to the fact that she accepted the challenge many years ago to become more involved in leadership roles in the industry. "It gives me the perfect opportunity to promote the benefits to other women as a career choice or to be involved in decision making and policy development roles", says Ms Crawford.

"I have the opportunity to influence a range of segments of the industry from politicians, CEOs of agribusiness to young people especially women who are seeking a career path in agriculture and to get more women involved in the industry".

To encourage more diversity and opportunities in the industry, more opportunities and a greater level of support must be provided by industry to women who step up to the plate of greater industry involvement.

"The influence of women in certain segments of agriculture especially livestock and horticulture outstrips the grains industry at levels of policy and decision making and needs to be addressed to increase our opportunities for growth and diversity", says Ms Crawford.

Ms Crawford said that the reality is that for the most part, the multiple roles women play are often understated or overlooked completely. Agriculture as a whole, and the grains industry in particular, must start placing greater value on their contribution.

"Agribusiness has a vital role to play in supporting women to get actively involved in all aspects of the industry, most significantly influencing the areas of decision making, practice change and career development of women in agriculture", says Ms Crawford.

However it is not all negative, certainly we are in an age where women are becoming more widely accepted in agriculture. These areas of opportunity will be discussed at the conference, along with how to encourage not only women to put their hat in the arena and once there how to recognise their achievements, but how industry bodies can be proactive in supporting women's involvement.

The Australian Summer Grains Conference will be held 7-9th March 2016 at RACV Royal Pines Resort, Gold Coast. Early bird registrations close 4th December 2015 via the conference website australiansummergrains.com.au.

Ends

Media Contact: Maree Crawford - 0427 757 418