






## Project Platypus Upper Wimmera Landcare

### MISSION

Support and empower community.  
Improve environmental health of Upper Wimmera  
Catchment.  
Maintain and improve productivity.

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## Down to Earth

NOVEMBER 14th UPDATE

Welcome to *Down to Earth*,

A round-up of events, opportunities and other information for your perusal.

### Events at a glance

**Fri. 17th Nov.** Native Grassland Information Day, Woorndoo Recreation Reserve. 9.30am -

2.30pm . RSVP [davidfranklin@grasslandflora.com.au](mailto:davidfranklin@grasslandflora.com.au).

**Wed. 2nd Nov.** Biochar uses in Agriculture, Portland Bowling Club. 9.30am - 3.00pm.  
RSVP Gary Milich 0409 949 850.

**21st Nov.** National Agriculture Day

**Fri. 24th Nov.** End of Year Paddock Walk & BBQ. Perennial Pasture Systems.

RSVP Rob Shea mob. 0438 521357 or [yadin@netconnect.com.au](mailto:yadin@netconnect.com.au)

Sat 25th Nov Icons of Our Waterways Capture & release platypus with School students Josh Griffithd Ceasar

**Until 26 Nov.** Women of the Land Exhibition - Melbourne

**Fri. 8th Dec. 6 PM** Christmas BBQ. Project Platypus Board. Crowlands hall

**Dec.(date to be confirmed)** Christmas BBQ & strategy meeting. Stawell Urban Landcare

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## Landcare roundup

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### WHAT'S NEW

#### Interactive website

**The Farm Table - where farmers feel at home online** <http://www.farmtable.com.au>

A **new website** just launched may be the answer for **farmers** looking for business & agricultural information. Login and you will have your own portal to **connect** with other farmers and agribusiness across Australia.

No longer do farmers, students or agribusinesses professionals need to spend hours searching for the answers they need across the infinitely endless web. The Farm Table does that work for you. If you feel like learning more, listen to Airlie Trescowthick, founder of *The Farm Table* interview with ABC Local [here](#).

#### Interactive App

**FrogID - The Australian Museum frog identification project** <https://www.frogid.net.au/>

Newly launched *FrogID* App for mobile phones is one for you to participate in as a citizen scientist.

Croaks, whistles, bleats and barks - every frog species makes a different sound! By recording a frog call with our new app, FrogID, you can discover which frogs live around you and help us count Australia's frogs!

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## CLIMATE/WEATHER

From BOM; The November to January rainfall outlook shows most of the country has around a 50% chance of above average

rainfall. <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary>

From BOM; Climate Outlook for next 3 months with Dr Andrew Watkins.

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/video>

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## Agriculture

**National Agriculture Day - Tuesday November 21 2017** [www.agday.org.au](http://www.agday.org.au)

Agriculture supports 1.6 million jobs across the supply chain in Australia and farmers care for about 47% of Australia's land mass.

Share your best food and farming photos with the hashtag #AgDay on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook. A day to celebrate agriculture, even though many will cutting hay, baling, windrowing & harvesting!



# Australian farm income passed **\$60 billion** for the first time last year

National Agriculture Day  
– 21 November 2017 –

## **BUSINESS SUPPORT**

**Australian Government - Wage subsidies** <https://jobsearch.gov.au/employer-info/wage-subsidies>

Wage subsidies provides a financial incentive to Australian businesses to hire, train and retain eligible job seekers into sustainable jobs.

Your business can get up to \$10,000 (GST inclusive) when you hire a new employee who is either:

- 15 - 24 years of age or
- 50 years of age and over.

Your business can get up to \$6,500 (GST inclusive) when you hire a new employee who is either:

- 25 - 29 years of age
- a principal carer parent
- an Indigenous Australian or
- a person registered with an employment services provider for 12 months or more.

Wage subsidies are paid by your employment services provider to your business over six months. You can set the payment schedule to suit your needs. Your provider can also discuss with you the option of a kickstart payment where you can get 40 per cent of the total wage subsidy amount four weeks after hiring a new employee.

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## Opportunities

### GRANTS

Wimmera Catchment Management Authority are currently seeking expressions of interest from landholders wanting to protect and enhance waterways on their properties. Funding is available for fencing and revegetation. Further details and the EOI form can be found at <http://www.wcma.vic.gov.au/news/news-detail/2017/08/29/funds-for-farmers-eoi>

### Smart Farm Grants

Farmers, community groups and industry groups are being encouraged to apply for grants to protect and improve the condition of soil, vegetation and biodiversity and help agricultural systems to adapt to change.

Smart Farms Small Grants will provide grants of between \$5,000 and \$100,000 to develop and extend new tools, methods and technology for farmers to continue to be at the forefront of land management.

**Round One applications opened on October 24 and will close on December 7, 2017.**

For more information on the grants and how to apply

<https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/grants/national-landcare-program-smart-farms-small-grants>

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### LEADERSHIP

**The Diversity in Agricultural Leadership Program** [www.farmers.org.au/diversity](http://www.farmers.org.au/diversity)

Australia's farm leaders are calling on agribusinesses to even the gender ledger on their Boards and in their senior executive ranks. The *Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program* is a new initiative, led by National Farmers' Federation (NFF) and the Australian Agricultural Company (AACo) which asks agribusiness, representative bodies and other farm-focused organisations to commit to meaningful change to enhance female participation.

Expressions of interest are now invited from agribusinesses, representative bodies and other farm-focused organisations – public and private – who wish to be a part of the Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program.

Individuals who wish to further their **agriculture leadership** aspirations can apply to be a part of the first Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Mentor Program when the **application process opens in December 2017**.

Express your interest at [www.farmers.org.au/diversity](http://www.farmers.org.au/diversity).

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## TRAINING

**Open Universities Australia** <https://www.open2study.com/>

If you are looking to try out university study why not try a free online course. Open2Study provides free, specialised short courses, entirely online, across the world, in a range of subject areas.

**Ruralbiz Training** [www.ruralbiztraining.com.au](http://www.ruralbiztraining.com.au)

Thinking of enhancing your education next year? RuralBiz Training offers training for farmers and rural communities. They are registered to deliver qualifications in the following study areas:

Agriculture:	Certificate III, Certificate IV, and Diploma
Agribusiness:	Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma
Conservation and Land Management:	Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma
Community Coordination and Facilitation:	Diploma
Education Support:	Certificate III, Certificate IV and Diploma
Governance:	Certificate IV
Horticulture:	Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma
Production Horticulture:	Certificate IV, Diploma (Production Nursery Management)

Flexible delivery is their specialty with courses available in interactive online mode, distance education and traditional face-to-face workshops. Farm Succession Planning and Chemical Card + Refresher are amongst some of the courses offered.

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**Now if you have managed to get this far and have read most, let us know what you would like us to add to make the newsletter better or you could have an event you may want mentioned or a topic to be covered. We are open to suggestions. Reply here. [llf@platypus.org.au](mailto:llf@platypus.org.au)**

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### **And to finish...**

A Texan farmer goes to Australia for a holiday. There he meets an Aussie farmer(cocky) and gets talking. The cocky shows off his big wheat crop and the Texan says in his Texan drawl, "We have wheat fields that are at least twice as large". Then they walk around the property a little and the cocky shows off his herd of cattle. The Texan immediately says, " We have longhorns that are at least twice as large as your cows". The conversation has, meanwhile, almost died when the Texan sees a herd of kangaroos hopping through the paddocks. He asks, "And what are those"? The cocky asks with an incredulous look, "Don't you have any grasshoppers in Texas?"

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