



# Newsletter

August 2007

Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc  
GPO Box 1108 Sydney NSW 2001  
Website: [www.nswfarmwriters.org](http://www.nswfarmwriters.org)

## The Great Divide: How To Get Over It

While the National Farmers Federation and many of the State Farm Organisations are wondering how they can bring city and country closer together, Victorian farmer Deb Bain has put together a program that really works.

In May 2007, in only its second year of operation, Farm Day brought 200 families from the city and country together for a rich social and educational experience.

On Friday August 31, Deb will tell Farm Writers why Farm Day works so well and her insights into how agriculture can be better explained to urban audiences.

Deb's achievements with Farm Day led to her being named as the 2007 Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award Winner.

Deb works in partnership with her husband David on their wool growing property in western Victoria, but her passion is for promoting the importance of agriculture to the broader economy and the urban population.

She pioneered the concept of Farm Day, providing the opportunity for a city family to be hosted by a farm family for the day, as a simple but effective way to promote agriculture.

Farm Day was successfully trialled in Victoria in May 2006.

This year the event has grown to include 200 city families visiting farms across Australia. Deb's vision is to grow Farm Day to be a major annual national event.

Deb believes the future viability of the family farm rests on the ability of agriculture to develop a better relationship with urban Australia.

"We have to demonstrate to urban Australia and to our capital city based Governments that there is more to agriculture than the economics.

"Farming families are part of the social fabric and environmental management capacity of a large part of Australia.

"But farmers are not good at telling their story to the metropolitan media.

"I believe there is a lack of balance in how farming is depicted in the metropolitan media; city reporters find it easier to air the views of activist groups rather than present the broader picture of agriculture.

Following the success of the first two Farm Days and her recognition as a rural leader, Deb is being asked to address farming organisations on how to better communicate with the city.



*Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award 2007 Winner- Deborah Bain*

Join our Corporate Members of the Month Grain Growers Association and Cox Inall Communications on Friday, 31 August to hear Deb Bain .

To book your place for lunch on Friday 31 August go to our website: [www.nswfarmwriters.org/BOOKINGS.htm](http://www.nswfarmwriters.org/BOOKINGS.htm)

**Register early and online for the Friday, 31 August lunch to hear Deb Bain.**

**Corporate Members of the Month Grain Growers Association and Cox Inall Communications.**

**Venue:** The Menzies Hotel, 14 Carrington Street, Sydney

**When:** **Friday, 31 August at 12pm for 12:30pm**

**Cost:** \$60 per head, or voucher, for members. \$70 per head for all non-members

**Register:** **BEFORE 5:00pm on Wednesday, 29 August 2007**

online: [www.nswfarmwriters.org](http://www.nswfarmwriters.org), email: [bookings@nswfarmwriters.org](mailto:bookings@nswfarmwriters.org), ph: **Stuart Hutton, (02) 9338 2626**

**Reminder:** If bookings are not cancelled by the deadline, the person making the booking will be invoiced. We will do our best to accommodate late bookings and cancellations – please phone **Stuart Hutton, (02) 9338 2626**.

# Carbon Cap and Trade Proposal Presents Policy Challenges for Agriculture

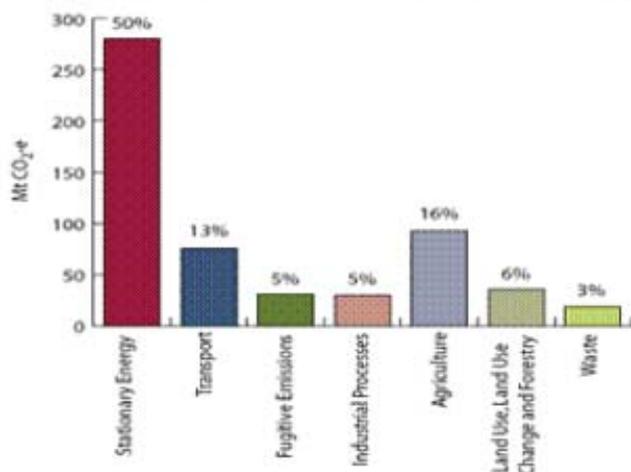
A report from a presentation by Director of the Australian Farm Institute Commission Mick Keogh at Farm Writers on July 27.

Australian Farm Institute Director Mick Keogh told the Farm Writers seminar on July 27 that agriculture would not initially be a direct participant in the greenhouse gas cap and trade scheme proposed by the Prime Minister's Taskforce due to start in 2011-2012.

Agriculture is Australia's second biggest emitter of greenhouse gasses after the stationary energy sector. Mr Keogh said the Taskforce found that inclusion of agriculture in the cap and trade scheme in the future would be desirable.

So while 900 of Australia's biggest emitters would be required to participate, agriculture will be outside the cap and trade system for the first few years at least.

Australia's greenhouse gas emissions by sector in 2004



Mr Keogh said there were a number of policy implications for agriculture from the proposed scheme. The Taskforce had recommended for relatively modest targets for emission cuts. This 'slow glide' path meant that the value of off-sets that agriculture might provide, such as low carbon emitting agriculture or permanent tree plantings, would be lower.

While agriculture would be outside the trading scheme farmers had the ability to participate in selling carbon off-sets to industries participating in the scheme.

If upfront targets were tougher, the value of offsets would climb, but so would energy and other farm input costs.

Mr Keogh said the baseline chosen for the cap and trade system was critically important. While the energy, industrial and waste sector's emissions had climbed steadily since 1990, agriculture's emissions had fallen significantly as the result of bans on land clearing and a reduction in the national sheep flock.

Its was likely agriculture would receive no credit for reducing its emissions during the past decade because the baseline would be set when agriculture was admitted to the scheme.

Mr Keogh said with agriculture outside the cap and trade scheme, there would be less need for farmers to account for their carbon footprint, but also little incentive to reduce farm emissions unless a wide range of farm greenhouse offsets were recognised.

There were a number of practical issues to overcome for agriculture to directly participate in the emissions trading scheme or to sell offsets to scheme participants. Farmers involved in the scheme would need to produce a 'carbon BAS statement', a quarterly account of carbon inputs and outputs in the manner that a GST statement is produced.

## Nature of greenhouse gas emissions - Australian agriculture (Co2 equivalents)

Source	Methane	Nitrous oxide	Total	% of national emissions
Enteric fermentation	64,230		64,230	11.7%
Manure	2,006	1,376	3,382	0.6%
Rice cultivation	591		591	0.1%
Agricultural soils		19,471	19,471	3.5%
Savannah burning	10,051	7,567	17,583	3.2%
Burning of residues	274	114	388	0.1%

## Annual General Meeting and Call for Committee Members

The Annual General Meeting of Farm Writers of NSW Association Inc will be held immediately prior to the lunchtime seminar on Friday 28th September. Members who wish to raise special resolutions should contact the Secretary (eray@hassall.com.au) without delay to ensure that the necessary forms are completed and the resolution circulated within the required notice period. We are also looking for committee members, so if you are interested in helping design a fantastic speakers program and illuminating important issues in the production, processing and marketing of food and fibre please indicate your interest at the AGM. For more information on the AGM or committee roles, please contact our president Bev Jordan on bevjordan@msn.com.au or telephone 00408699656.

### July 2007

Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc

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