



Newsletter

September 2003

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Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc. GPO Box 1108 Sydney NSW 2001

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Regional Business Development: is it for real? And does it have a future?

The speaker at our next lunch meeting on September 26, Dr John Keniry, wears lots of hats in the agribusiness world and could speak on many topics.

One of those hats is as chairman of the Regional Business Development Analysis Panel appointed by the Federal Government, and this is what he will concentrate on at our meeting.

The five member panel has conducted a 12 month investigation into the issues facing regional business in Australia and looked at what might be done to address those issues.

A secondary theme will be WoolPoll 2003, where wool producers vote later this year to decide what level of compulsory levy should be set on wool sales to finance research and promotion.

Dr Keniry is chairman of the Woolpoll 2003 panel which is running the poll, and he will speak about the importance of the poll to the Australian wool industry.

As the owner of a fine wool and cropping enterprise in the NSW Central West, he may also have a vote.

His other main hats are as chairman of both Ridley Corporation Ltd, Australia's largest stock feed manufacturer, and with interests in North America, and



Regional development and WoolPoll 2003 to get the Keniry treatment on Friday 26 September.

of Sugar Australia Ltd.

Dr Keniry gained his PhD, in chemical engineering, at Cambridge University in 1971.

He is immediate past president of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and previously held positions for the National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals, the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation and the Grape and Wine Research and development Corporation.

He was also a member for five years of the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council.

The meeting starts, as usual, at 12:00 noon for 12:30pm at the All Seasons Premier Menzies Hotel.

Register early and on-line for Friday 26 September's luncheon seminar with John Keniry

Corporate 'Members of the Month': Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and University of Sydney (Faculty of Agriculture)

Venue: The **ALL SEASONS PREMIER MENZIES HOTEL** 14 Carrington Street, Sydney.

When: 12:00 noon for 12:30pm: Friday, 26 September, 2003

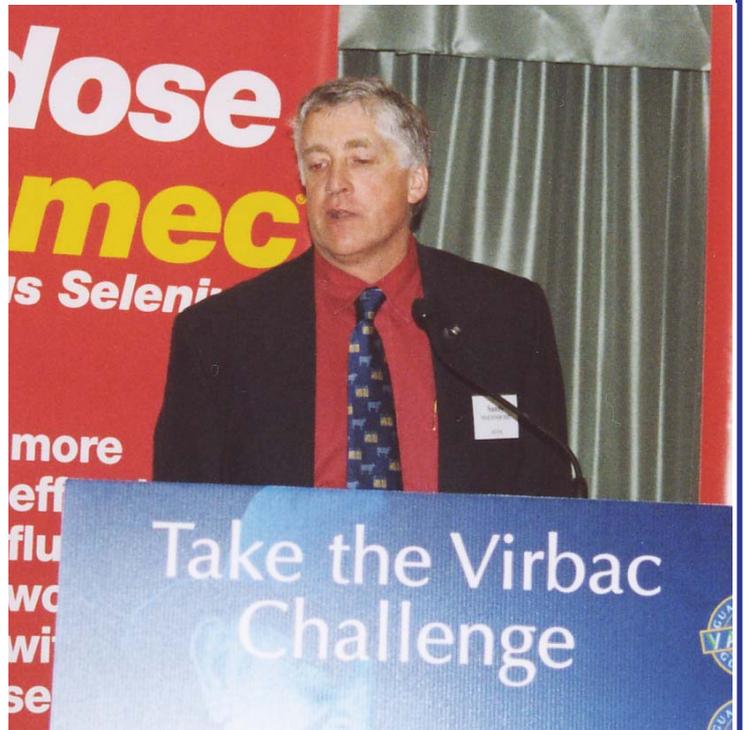
Cost: \$50 per head, or voucher

Register: On-line before 5:00pm, Tuesday 23 September at www.nswfarmwriters.org. Or through *Australian Honey Bee Industry Council's* Laurel Pickering: ahbic@honeybee.org.au Phone: 02 9221 0911 or Fax: 02 9221 0922

Late cancellations: Phone Amy Lawrence (02 8204 3857)

If you missed August's meeting ...

ALFA's Maconochie: spirited attack on ethanol subsidies



Subsidies to the ethanol industry don't go down well with the beef cattle lot feeding industry, according to our August guest speaker, the president of the Australian Lot Feeders Association, Sandy Maconochie.

He told the Friday lunch meeting the subsidy allowed ethanol producers to pay a lot more for grain and could drive up the price for feed grains for lot feeders.

He said the 38 cents a litre subsidy on locally produced ethanol translated to a \$150 a tonne advantage for ethanol manufacturers when buying sorghum.

It's not that his industry doesn't favour renewable energy but it doesn't want to have to compete with subsidised buyers for feed grain.

Mr Maconochie said the amount of grain potentially diverted ethanol production was high.

Every two per cent of current fuel usage that was replaced by ethanol would require about a million tonnes of grain, and the industry was talking of about

10pc replacement.

He said also ethanol lagged behind lot feeding as a value adding industry. Every 10,000 tonnes of grain used in lot feeding equated to four full time jobs and indirectly to a further 20 jobs, compared with two direct and six indirect jobs in the ethanol industry.

Mr Maconochie also provided a snapshot of the current scale of the lot feeding industry.

There were more than one million head of cattle on feed at any time which accounted for 25 per cent of cattle slaughtering, 30pc of carcass weight, 40pc of table beef and more than 80pc of the beef sold by supermarkets.

It was also an important export industry

It employed about 1,600 people full time and a further 7,000 indirectly and sales totalled about \$3 billion a year.

But one of its major challenges was the perennial problem of security of grain supply and it was vulnerable to fluctuations in supply.

Second reminder: IFAJ Congress in South Africa

The 2004 IFAJ Conference will be held in South Africa from 12 to 20 March. As is traditional, NSW Farm Writers' provide support for a number of members to attend the congress.

Selection of delegates will be based, largely, on members' contribution to and involvement in Farm Writers'. Farm Writers' is seeking expressions of interest, in writing, to Secretary, Susan Madden, GPO Box 1108 Sydney NSW 2001 (smadden@hassall.com.au). For more information about the congress, visit the IFAJ web site: www.ifaj.org/congresses

Second reminder: Annual General Meeting

The 2003 Annual General Meeting of Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc will be held at 11.30am on Friday 31 October. Singed and seconded notices of motion should be forwarded by 17 October to Susan Madden, Secretary, Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc, GPO Box 1108 Sydney NSW 2001 (smadden@hassall.com.au)

'Sinkers': 31 October

National Party legend and now a genuine national treasure, Ian Sinclair, will be our speaker on Friday 31 October. Now that is NOT for missing!