



Rabobank



# Client Councils Update

Issue 2 – June 2014

Welcome to the June issue of the Client Councils Update, which covers the latest news and initiatives from Rabobank Client Councils.

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**Strengthening  
vital communities**

### ***Customer involvement through Client Councils***

- Key clients take an active part in Client Councils.
- Use the dialogue with clients:
  - For transparency and information from Rabobank to its clients, both global and local.
  - To facilitate an active discussion on:
    - Industry challenges
    - Relevant topics for the community
    - Feedback on Rabobank's role as an agribusiness and rural bank.

## Rabobank Client Council themes

**1 LONG-TERM INDUSTRY CAPACITY AND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION**

- Challenge of retaining and attracting youth
- Succession planning (ownership) and agricultural force (labour)
- Decreasing offer of agricultural education in rural areas
- Lack of recognition of agricultural skills.

**2 SUSTAINABILITY**

- Environmental compliance
- Water availability, water quality and erosion
- Waste Management.

**3 FARMING REPUTATION**

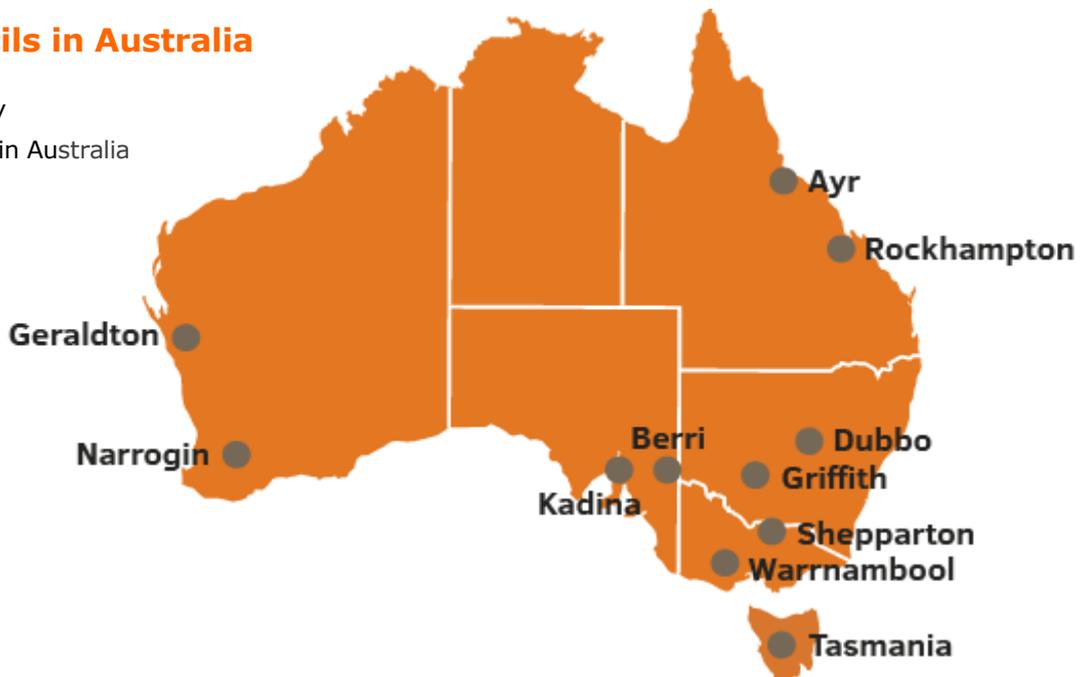
- Urban/rural divide
- Unbalanced communication causes misperceptions of farming practices and hurts farming's reputation.

**4 RURAL HEALTH**

- Access to health care in rural and remote areas
- Denial of health issues
- Need of early identification of mental health issues.

## Client Councils in Australia

There are currently  
11 Client Councils in Australia



Client Councils	Theme local focus
Ayr	■ ■ ■ Sustainability   Youth engagement
Rockhampton	■ ■ ■ Education and career opportunities in agriculture
Dubbo	■ ■ ■ Young farmers financial workshops   Rural and Mental Health
Griffith	■ ■ ■ Youth engagement
Shepparton	■ ■ ■ Career opportunities in agriculture
Warrnambool	■ ■ ■ Career opportunities in agriculture   Urban/Rural divide
Tasmania	■ ■ ■ Youth engagement
Berri	■ ■ ■ TBC
Kadina	■ ■ ■ Youth engagement
Narrogin	■ ■ ■ Youth engagement   Mentoring
Geraldton	■ ■ ■ Youth engagement   Mentoring

## Initiatives progress update

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### ■■■ Pitstop Health Check – Partnership with RFDS

If patients will not go to the doctor, the doctor must come to the patients...



Client Councils agreed on the importance of promoting awareness of health in rural and regional Australia. One of the best ways of reaching out to the rural community is through the field days and agricultural shows.

Rabobank partnered with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) to pilot the 'Pit Stop Health Check' at the Gilgandra Show last May. The health check included an initial registration, followed by successive checks of blood pressure and skin, weight and heart smoking/ lung, AusD-diabetes screen, diet and alcohol consumption, mental health screen. The seventh station involved a GP review of the participants results, and when required, a referral to a relevant GP. Each of the stations was staffed by allied health professionals, including a psychologist to assess mental health. Verbal recommendations and health promotion information was provided at each station.



The Pit Stop Health Check itself was a huge success, with over 100 individual health screenings, of which 40 per cent presented health issues resulting in a referral.

The RFDS used their simulator to draw attention to the Pit Stop, which attracted over 340 visitors. Rabobank Dubbo branch staff put their RFDS t-shirts on and took their community leave day, splitting the team across the two days.

Given the Pit Stop pilot was very well received and appreciated by show attendants, the RFDS and Rabobank are considering other opportunities to replicate this initiative in the future.

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### ■■■ Farm Experience Program - Pilot update

The long-term agricultural industry capacity and the image of farming are main concerns of our Client Council members. Through the FX pilot Program, Rabobank is introducing host farmers to selected schools to raise awareness and promote farming, food and fibre production and its supply chain through the schools' Workplace Learning Programs.

The FX Program is a fantastic opportunity for city based students to learn about the Australian food and fibre industry by experiencing it firsthand.



FX will be piloted in WA in early August, with students from Lockridge Senior High School spending a week on farms from the Narrogin and Geraldton regions; and in NSW in early September, with students from Galston High School spending a week on farms throughout the Western Riverina region.

The students will experience a warm welcome from their host farming family, who are passionate about their role in feeding and clothing the world. Once they return from their farm stay, the participating students will be asked to share their story with their class mates.

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## ■■■ African Farmers Program

Client Council members responded enthusiastically on the work of our Rabo Development division around the world. The question was tabled at a number of Client Council meetings: 'How can we get involved?'

Particular interest came from our Western Riverina Client Council hosted by the Griffith branch and the Southland Client Council hosted by Invercargill in New Zealand. After some good discussions an idea was born to pilot an 'African Farmers Exchange Program'.

We teamed up with Zanaco Bank in Zambia, one of Rabo Development's partner banks and developed the idea to offer emerging talented young farmers from Zambia an opportunity to have a learning experience in Australia and New Zealand, hosted by our clients. The program will start with the host farmers visiting Zambia for orientation ahead of their important role as mentors for the African farmers, who will stay at their farm for a six week period.

Southland dairy farmers Abe and Anita de Wolde have offered to host a Zambian dairy farmer. Since maize is the main crop in Zambia, a maize farmer will be hosted and mentored by an Australian client.

At the time of publishing this update, we are making the arrangements for the orientation visit where two Rural Managers from Rabobank will accompany the host farmers and meet their peers in Zambia for an internal exchange program.



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## ■■■ Career Advisers training

Goulburn Murray Client Council members are focusing on an ambitious project, after concerns were raised about the level of awareness shared by careers advisers regarding career opportunities in the agriculture industry. Questions were raised about what career advisers know about primary production and where they get their information from. Are they indeed actively discouraging students to choose a career in agriculture?



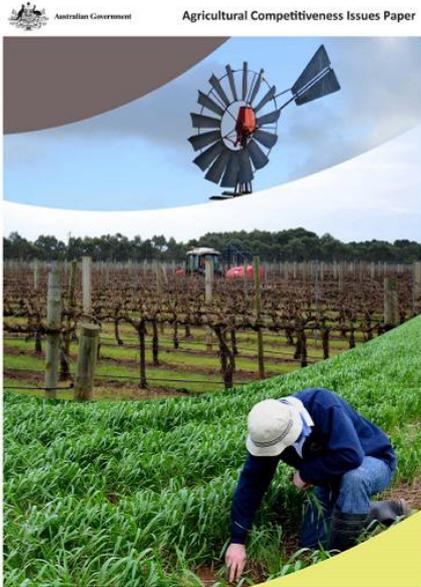
Client Council members believe there is merit in investing in a proper information channel into schools, specifically targeting careers advisers. Through our various discussions about this topic, we came across another organisation that identified this as an issue. Marcus Oldham College, located in Geelong, is one of the most reputable education centres in the area of primary production and equine business management. Principal Simon Livingstone recognises the influence of career advisers on their college applications, seeing a link between career advisers who have an understanding of agriculture and student applications

The Goulburn Murray Client Council is working with Marcus Oldham College to prepare a careers advisers forum, focused exclusively on agriculture and the opportunities available. It will be a two-day event for approximately 30 careers advisers from secondary schools. The forum aims to showcase the cutting edge technology in the industry, provide inspirational presenters, and highlight the demand for the brightest people.

The plan includes the development of a blueprint so the forum can be replicated in other regions across the country. This could include teaching aides and materials to provide career advisers and agricultural teachers greater tools to use back in the classroom and present a more accurate picture of the complexity and sophistication of agriculture and the exciting and challenging opportunities the industry offers.

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## White paper submission



Rabobank recognises the feedback from our Client Council members in many different ways. Recently we shared the opportunity to leverage members' feedback at government tables and forums.

A number of Rabobank Board Members met with the Australian Minister of Agriculture, Barnaby Joyce and Rabobank was requested to contribute to the 'Competitiveness issues for Australian Agriculture' white paper.

A number of Client Council members have contributed to our submission and a selection of topics has been pursued further in the submission, whilst other contributions have been collected for later ongoing discussion with Canberra.

To see the Rabobank's 'Response to Australian Agricultural Competitiveness Issues Paper' submission click [here](#).

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your feedback.

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## Young Farmers Master Class

Forty farmers from around the globe met in The Netherlands for Rabobank's first Young Farmers Master Class. The Master Class was held from Saturday 31 May to Friday 6 June and focused on what lies ahead for the next generation of farmers – the changes, the challenges and the opportunities.

The week-long program focused on the strategic challenges for farmers preparing for the next phase of their professional development within the context of global food security (succession, social media, big data, innovation, best farm practices). More than half of the participants took the opportunity of a farm stay with a fellow farmer in The Netherlands.

**Why?** Rabobank is committed to putting young farmers in the spotlight. Our Client Councils frequently remind us how critical the role of the young farmers is for the sustainability of Australian and New Zealand agriculture. The world relies on the next generation of farmers to provide food security for a growing global population.

Five producers from across Australia were selected to take part in Rabobank's Young Farmers Master Class: Erin Green, Yuna, Western Australia; James McShane, Lower Marshes, Tasmania; Tom Acocks, Rochester, Victoria; Kate Davidson, Curlewis, NSW and Jamie Jurgens, Bowen, Queensland. While their enterprises differ vastly, ranging from tomatoes to dairying, fine wool production and grain, they have all embraced innovation and new ideas on their respective farms.

Through a media campaign involving social and traditional channels, Rabobank put these young farmers in the spotlight providing a space to share their insights and experiences with other likeminded young Australian farmers.

The Young Farmers Master Class is part of a series of events which make up Rabobank's Banking4Food strategy, with the next Global Farmers Master Class to be held in November 2014.

To see more blogs click [here](#).



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## ■ ■ ■ Rabobank Leadership Awards 2014

Rabobank's commitment to agribusiness and the rural sector goes way beyond finance. Our knowledge of the sector puts us in a unique position. We see the talent, initiative and effort needed to develop and grow agricultural business, and we come across people whose work deserves the highest accolades. Our prestigious Rabobank Leadership Awards recognise these people who contribute significantly to the sector. Individuals are nominated for this award by their industry peers, making it one of the most highly-regarded awards in the Australian and New Zealand food, beverage and agribusiness sectors.

The awards will be presented at the Rabobank Leadership Dinner in October 2014, with two Award categories:

1. The **Rabobank Leadership Award** recognises an individual in a leadership role who has made a significant contribution to the Australian and/or New Zealand food, beverage and agribusiness sectors.
2. The **Emerging Agribusiness Leader Award** recognises an up and coming leader, with industry tenure of 10 years or less, and who has made a significant contribution to the Australian and/or New Zealand food, beverage and agribusiness sectors.

Both awards will be judged based on the following criteria:

- Significant achievement as a senior leader in building, rejuvenating, or expanding a business in the food, agribusiness or beverage sectors
- Develops and communicates a clear vision and direction for sustainable growth and prosperity at both a corporate and industry level
- Regarded as a good corporate citizen and demonstrates social commitment.

Individuals holding a leadership position in an Australian or New Zealand food, beverage and agribusiness organisation are eligible to be nominated for the Rabobank Leadership Award.

To be eligible to be nominated for the Emerging Agribusiness Leader Award, nominees must have industry tenure of 10 years or less.

For more information on Rabobank's Leadership Awards click [here](#).



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## ■ ■ ■ LinkedIn Discussion Group

The Rabobank Australia Client Councils' Discussion Group was created to enable members to share information between meetings and to increase networking opportunities between Client Council members around the country.



We encourage you to join the discussion and share any articles you may find interesting in relation to the Client Councils themes discussed.

To join the group, click [here](#).

## Your valuable contribution as a Client Council member

We would like to thank you for your input into the Client Council dialogue so far.

Rabobank has a long term view on business and relationships. This is also relevant for the themes that we have agreed upon to contribute to a sustainable food and agribusiness industry.

As the Client Council concept is still quite new, we are sometimes asked, 'What is my role as a Client Council member?' Your contribution as a Client Council member can include:

- Active participation in Client Council meetings;
- Suggestions for agenda items;
- Your feedback on current and future initiatives related to the agreed themes;
- Use of your network of contacts when engaging with local stakeholders like schools, research institutes, councils, other community members, etc.
- Recommending subject matter experts;
- Recruiting participants for the local activation of initiatives;
- Knowledge sharing;
- Your feedback on our strategy, products and services.

As explained in previous meetings, our ultimate view on ownership of the Client Councils is by having them chaired by our clients.

